The Dissertation Committee for David Randall Hefner

certifies that this is the approved version of the following dissertation:

The Incomparable Means of Instruction:

John Dewey's *Art as Experience* Applied as the Conceptual Foundation

for

Kindergarten through Elementary Curriculum

Committee:

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O.L. Davis, Jr. Supervisor

_____

Sherry Field

_____

Mary Lee Webeck

_____

Paul Bolin

_____

Donald Herron

# The Incomparable Means of Instruction:

# John Dewey's *Art as Experience* Applied as the Conceptual Foundation

# for

# Kindergarten through Elementary Curriculum

by

David Randall Hefner (B.S.; M.F.A.)

Dissertation

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David Randall Hefner, Ph.D.

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Supervisor: O. L. Davis Jr.

John Dewey's *Art as Experience* (1934) declares art to be the "incomparable organ of instruction" on the third to last page of the book. This dissertation analyzes the place of children within the aesthetic philosophy Dewey expresses in the text and what the implications of *Art as Experience* could mean if applied to the art-making of children as the foundation for developing kindergarten and elementary curriculum. By exploring Dewey's earlier writings on education and art, the dissertation develops a view of how art-making could be applied in a Deweyan pedagogy. The main influences on Dewey's aesthetic development are explored including the frequently overlooked influence of F. Matthias Alexander. Particular emphasis is given to Dewey's relationship with Albert

Barnes and Dewey's place in the Barnes Foundation as the Director of Education. The writings of Barnes and Dewey's three associate directors of education are considered for their possible influence on Dewey's aesthetic development as it applies to establishing a Deweyan philosophy of art-based education.

A selection of the initial reviews of *Art As Experience* from 1934 and 1935 are analyzed to establish the reception of the book. The contentious arguments that Dewey and Benedetto Croce exchanged in print from the late 1940s until both men's deaths are explored for what they reveal about Dewey's view of intuition in art-making. A selection of contemporary writers' views on Dewey's aesthetics are considered as well as the conclusions of the 1989 University of Illinois Symposium on the influence of *Art as Experience*.

The dissertation concludes by isolating twenty concepts from *Art as Experience* and considering their meaning as the foundation on which kindergarten and elementary curriculum could be formed. The guidelines are built upon 76 passages from *Art as Experience* and establish John Dewey as a dominant influence in the formation of Art Education.

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# CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION:

# JOHN DEWEY AND "THE INCOMPARABLE MEANS OF INSTRUCTION"

## *Means & Reconsidering Dewey*

### *Means*

Three pages from the end of John Dewey's 1934 treatise, *Art as Experience*, the American philosopher, declared art to be "the incomparable organ of instruction" (AE, 1934, p. 347). When his book is read with this idea as its dominant theme it opens up possibilities to reform how children's curriculum could be structured more effectively. My intention is to analyze the book and extract a set of philosophical guidelines on which the curriculum for kindergarten and elementary children could be based.

Dewey's writing style often requires multiple readings to find clarity. The passage from which my title derives indicates what a perplexing task it can be to determine the fullness of Dewey's meaning. This dissertation is an attempt to find the clarity of meaning in what Dewey proposed as the paradigm of how people experience and create. In his exalted claim Dewey declares an educational philosophy that is founded on the conception that the processes of learning are manifest in our relationship to art and art-making. John Dewey's quotation of page 347, *Art As Experience*:

"It is by way of communication that art becomes the incomparable organ of instruction, but the way is so remote from that usually associated with the idea of education, it is a way that lifts art so far above what we are accustomed to think of as

instruction, that we are repelled by any suggestion of teaching and learning in connection with art" (*AE*, Dewey, 1934, p. 47).

In this statement Dewey declares art as the supreme medium of education. To paraphrase more directly, Dewey is saying: In teaching and learning, art is a means of communication without peer. The characterization of art as remote in the 21st century life of the child is archaic, although art within the classroom does remain relatively remote. Within the present educational system in which standardized test scores are sanctioned to determine accreditation and the allocation of resources, art does not hold a place of high priority as if art were viewed as a repelling contradiction to the curriculum goals and standards by which we an elementary student's success is gauged.

*Art as Experience* is a treatise on the relationship of art to the individual and her or his environment. Taken as a whole, the book could be culminated in Dewey's quotation of page 347. The ideas of the book could be interpreted as supporting art as the central core of curriculum design. That Dewey himself did not expand the case for curriculum development with art as the foundation, or that he did not attempt to apply the philosophy of art as experience to education, is a mystery. The quotation stands as his only stated premise for not doing so. Despite raising the potential for art in education to an exalted state, the statement is defeatist in tone and dismissive of the possibility that art, as a means of communication, would be implemented in the teaching strategies of traditional education. Dewey's whole premise, developed

throughout *A as E,* is encapsulated in his declaration of the communicative powers of art and the potential for the place of art-making in teaching and learning.

The sentence following this quotation begins with "But," making it both a contradiction and continuation of the preceding sentence: *"*But our revolt is in fact a reflection upon education that proceeds by methods so literal as to exclude the imagination and one not touching the desires and emotions of men" (*AE*, 1934, p. 347). By not addressing *A as E* to a philosophical foundation of curriculum, the book seemingly does not launch "our revolt." The promise of the beauty of Dewey's alignment of art, imagination, our desires and emotions in teaching and learning remains unfulfilled.

To understand what lies at the heart of the quotation I will analyze Dewey's ideas developed in *A as E* on the relationship of art, the artist and the viewer. An analysis of the context of *A as E* in Dewey's other writings offers insight into the implications of art as experience to curriculum formation. What others have concluded of *A as E* may demonstrate what Dewey's thoughts on art could mean, if applied to children's art-making.

The development of a greater understanding of the potential of Dewey's art philosophy in the formation of elementary education is the goal of this dissertation. I believe *Art as Experience* can be a living method and means of interpreting and understanding information and ideas. The creative act in art-making includes a high level of problem solving. Art-making is an engaging method of theoretical gamesmanship. Personal artistic styles are established through preferences, intuition,

pervious knowledge, the interplay of memories and the senses engaged in seeking solutions to problems of the artist's own design whose outcomes only the artist him or herself can determine to be successful or complete. The consideration, discovery and arrangement of experience is a process in which art applies an approach akin to the scientific method. The creative process in art-making connects ideas, knowledge and direct experience to form a conceptual understanding of the underlying meanings that define existence, pleasure and a collective recognition of success. For the kindergarten child, art is the incomparable means to create a conceptual development for the processes of thought that establish the core of the strategies the child will employ in a lifetime of learning and teaching.

In the 74 years (add to this number the years past '08) since *A as E*'s publication a significant aspect of what Dewey considered art's remoteness has been removed. In relation to education, one only needs to recognize the obvious: most Americans are continually interpreting their reality through some form of media that draws from the arts. In 1934, art, outside of the child's own creations, was children's picture books, the rare gallery, museums, movies, church presentations, summer stock pageants, Christmas plays, and musical reviews with dancers that ranged culturally from back-of-the-buckboard clogging to en point ballet. Today media surrounds and defines society in a continual motion with ever-present media interpretations. Today, the primary usage of the word "remote," is as a hand-held electronic control device. Dewey's ironic declaration mocked the educational establishment he had been professionally a part of for 55 years, since his first teaching appointment in

1879. Within the norm of traditional rote education, a primary emphasis on art could have seemed "repelling" as a means of communication in teaching and learning. Acknowledging the influence of art in contemporary society dispels the context of the quotation, however, in the school-life of a child Dewey's pronouncement remains relevant.

Perhaps at the age of 75 years Dewey did not believe he had the time to undertake the application of the philosophy of *A as E* to education. Nevertheless, he was active as a writer, educator and philosopher until the end of his life 18 years later, in 1952. Maybe Dewey thought the book was long enough and taking on the relationship between art and education was work for another publication. There is a very unsatisfying 1947 Barnes Foundation book with four co-authors under Dewey's name with the title, *Art and Education* that does not address the place of art within curriculum formation.

Perhaps the point of not applying the ideas of *A as E* to teaching and learning until the end of the book and then to cast it in such a defeatist and ironic statement was to challenge his and future generations. The question now is, does society have the perspective on children to rise to the incredible opportunity that art-making offers to communicate the core curriculum goals?

In today's high-stakes test environment in which a school's survival is not based on the overall education of the students but on grade specific assessment through standardized multiple-choice tests, this question is probably moot. I am attempting to address the opportunity to subsequent educational administrations and

the possibility of reconsidering and redefining "No Child Left Behind" through a curriculum with art as the core means of communication.

*Reconsidering Dewey*

My intention is to substantiate Dewey's quotation as a seminal expression of art educational reform, and to establish the philosophy of art as experience as the basis for pedagogy with art at the integrated core of curriculum design. *A as E* is not a curriculum guide. Dewey does not apply his ideas to children or speculate what the philosophy could create if used as the foundation of elementary curriculum. He offers no analysis of what *A as E* would suggest in application other than the joyful and disparaging quotation of 347. The assertion of the quotation as "disparaging" is in his contention that art is beyond our consideration as a teaching strategy —yet as a means of communication— beyond comparison. *Art as Experience* in practice proposes an educational methodology in which all the subjects are taught through an art-based curriculum. My intention in this introduction is to define the goals and establish the parameters of this dissertation.

*Outline*

In chapter II I begin by going back to Dewey's early writings on curriculum for young children. "Postscript: Three Years of the University Elementary School" (PS), 1899, *The School and Society* (SS), 1900, and *The Child and the Curriculum* (CC), 1902, establish Dewey's belief in child-centered education. The dominant themes of *A as E* as they apply to children are established in these works and their

inclusions of art-making offer insight into the place of art within Dewey's ideas of child-centered curriculum.

Chapter III explores the relationship of art and education in other writings of Dewey's between 1910 and 1934. This chapter also introduces the eccentric art collector Albert C. Barnes and establishes his influence on Dewey's developing knowledge of aesthetics, paintings and contemporary art.

Chapter IV mainly focuses on the ideas of two books on *Art as Experience*: Thomas M. Alexander's, 1987, *John Dewey's Theory of Art, Experience & Nature: The Horizons of Feelings* and Philip W. Jackson's, 1998, *John Dewey and the Lessons of Art.* Neither of these books addresses *A as E* specifically to children and the concerns of elementary curriculum. However, the work of both scholars enhances an understanding of how the philosophy of art as experience could be applied to children and art-making. Chapter III introduces and explores the influence of F. Matthias Alexander on Dewey's conception of experience. The chapter also reflects on the practices of the Dewey School and the ideas presented in *Schools of Tomorrow* that Dewey wrote with his eldest daughter, Evelyn, in 1915.

Chapter V focuses on the Dewey's relationship with the Barnes Foundation and the writings of Dewey's fellow Foundation board members on the educational implications of art based pedagogy. The writings of Dewey's Assistant-directors of Education are clearly influential on the aesthetic philosophy that will become *A as E*.

Chapter VI includes a survey of some of the initial reviews of *A as E* from 1934 and 1935. It also explores the articles and responses between Benedetto Croce

and Dewey (1948 to 1952) that were published in the *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism.* The contemporary analysis of the exchanges between the philosophers in the *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* is also reviewed. The chapter concludes with a reflection on the conclusions of the University of Illinois' 1989 Symposium on John Dewey's *Art as Experience.* This symposium continues to be the most recent in depth discussion of the meaning and lasting effects of *A as E*.

Chapter VII explores Barnes's method of interpreting art and how it can enhance our understanding of an application of *A as E* to children's pedagogy. The chapter also considers some of the criticisms of Dewey's writing style, and how Dewey's philosophy of art and experience can form the foundation for teaching and learning through guided art-making.

In chapter VIII I will consider the passages that make direct references to children. There are only 26 times in the whole of *A as E* where Dewey brings children specifically into the consideration of the ideas of art as experience. I will isolate each passage that references children directly, and apply the ideas to forming curriculum for kindergarten and elementary students.

In chapter IX I will take another selected 50 quotations from *A as E* that have significant importance when directed to a consideration of children and their art-making. I will analyze each passage to discern how the ideas of *A as E* could be applied to children and his or her art-making. At the end of the chapter I will summarize the collective meaning of both sets of quotations.

In these two exercises I create a synopsis of art as experience as it could be applied to children and their relationship to art-making, specifically within elementary curriculum formation.

Chapter X works from these 76 quotations of Dewey's to establish twenty guidelines that could serve as the foundation for a philosophy of art-based education. If these guidelines were applied to curriculum formation, Dewey's vision of art as experience could be brought to fruition as the incomparable means of instruction.

# CHAPTER II:

# ART AND EDUCATION IN JOHN DEWEY'S BOOKS AND ARTICLES PUBLISHED BEFORE *A AS E*

In this chapter I will explore the origins of John Dewey's dominant themes for children and curriculum design emphasized in early writings on art. In *Postscript: Three Years of the University Elementary School* (*PS*, 1899), *The School and Society* (*S & S*, 1900, rev. 1915) and in *The Child and the Curriculum* (*C & C,* 1902), Dewey lays out the problems that *A as E* answers if it were read in terms of curriculum design. His *The School and Society* repeatedly stresses the need to find a unifying force for curriculum. As with *A as E,* the chapters of *S & S* were compiled from a lecture series that Dewey never truly edited into a cohesive book. In "Note on the Publishing History of the Text and on This Edition" of *S & S,* Philip W. Jackson asserts that Dewey presented the three lectures comprising the book to the "parents and others interested in the University Elementary School" in April 1899 (Jackson in *SS*, Dewey, 1990, p. xxxi).

## *School and Society*

Several times in both *S & S* and *C & C* Dewey stresses that a unifying force is needed in order to bridge the core curriculum subjects. The following three examples

clearly express this notion; two are from *S & S* and one from *C & C*: "The problem is to unify, to organize education, to bring all its various factors together, through putting it as a whole into organic union with everyday life" (*SS,* Dewey, 1900, p. 92). Dewey has an answer to "the problem" that he will lead his reader to determine and name on their own.

Dewey categorizes the levels of the school as: kindergarten, primary, grammar or intermediate, high school, university, and graduate school. Dewey observes of these divisions: "The great problem in education on the administrative side is how to unite these different parts" (*SS,* 1900, p. 70). He defines the problem as the need to "secure the unity of the whole, in the place of a sequence of more or less unrelated and overlapping parts, and thus to reduce the waste arising from friction, reduplication, and transitions that are not properly bridged" (*SS*, p. 72). In *Child and the Curriculum*, 1902, Dewey realized that: "the easy thing is to seize upon something in the nature of the child, or upon something in the developed consciousness of the adult, and insist upon that element as the key to the whole problem" (*CC,* 1902, p. 182).

Perhaps these statements are simply rhetorical. Dewey weaves these inquisitive musings into his argument so that, even in his text, his tone of voice could turn the stating of these problems into playful taunts. In each of the lectures that comprise *PS, S & S* and *C & C* Dewey was seeking funds to continue the Laboratory School. Dewey kept very complete financial records, documented in the school's own

publications. In *Postscript: Three Years of the University Elementary School* Dewey thoroughly accounts for the school's finances. The tuition the students paid and the donations to the school did not cover all of the school's expenses, but the university was not willing to accept the financial responsibility for the school as a necessary expense of its education training program. Despite his efforts, Dewey was not able to persuade the university to view the Laboratory School as it would a hard science laboratory essential to instruction in the science disciplines. While the financial shortfall was an inconsequential amount for the University of Chicago, Dewey clearly was being pressured to make the program self-supporting (*SS*, 1900, p. xv). The financial urgency to generate donations encouraged Dewey to express his views to the audience in the clearest terms possible. This action resulted in *S & S*, the *Postscript* and *C & C* being some of Dewey's most accessible and least convoluted writings.

Both *S & S* and *C & C* fit together thematically and ideologically, so much so that they usually are published in a single volume (e.g., University of Chicago Press 1990 edition and Dover Publications' 2001 edition). The University of Chicago edition also contains Dewey's report to the Parents' Association of the University Elementary School: *Postscript: Three Years of the University Elementary School*. The Chicago edition also includes an introduction by Philip W. Jackson. (Because to these additions, the Chicago edition is the text I have used to cite my page references.)

In the *Postscript,* Dewey sees one of the school's main goals as determining "How can instruction in these formal, symbolic branches —the mastering of the

ability to read, write, and use figures intelligently— be carried on with everyday experience and occupation as their background and in definite relations to other studies of more inherent content, and be carried on in such a way that the child shall feel their necessity through their connection with subjects which appeal to him on their own account?" (*PS,* 1899, p. 168). That is a formidable question. It may need to be read again. Dewey guides his audience and reader to "art" as the response and answer to the question.

Near the end of the *Postscript* report to the Parents' Association, Dewey makes a direct argument for the place of the arts within the Laboratory School experiment: "If I do not spend a large amount of time in speaking of the music and art work, it is not because they are not considered valuable and important – certainly as much so as any other work done in the school, not only in the development of the child's moral and aesthetic nature, but also from a strictly intellectual point of view. I know of no work in the school that better develops the power of attention, the habit of observation and of consecutiveness, of seeing parts in relation to a whole" (*PS,* 1899, p. 174).

This comment is a powerful acknowledgement of the positive influence of art within the development of a child's growth. He credits the benefits of art within the curriculum, beyond the development of the child's moral, aesthetic character, "but also from a strictly intellectual point of view" with developing the attention span,

observation skills, the notion of consecutiveness, and "of seeing parts in relation to a whole" (*PS*, 1899, p. 174).

For pre-reading children, engaging them with their own creations offers the greatest opportunity for self-generated interpretive-interaction with a two-dimensional format. If it is desired that the second grader apply her or his newly acquired reading skills for a half hour period of time, then the child needs to have developed the ability to fully focus on the paper before them. Art commands the young child's active concentration for longer than any other self-motivated exercise and helps develop the critical skills of focusing the mind.

What Dewey categorizes as "the habit of observation of consecutiveness" is the process that every child experiences when drawing and learning to develop a narrative structure. In the seven years that I taught kindergarten, I noticed that four and five-year-olds working with color crayons, pencils, markers or watercolors will often start with a green line across the bottom of a drawing for grass and a blue line across the top for sky. Most typically the child draws the main character next, usually as representing her or himself, in the middle of the page, near the green line but not touching it. Then the narrative detail emerges, a kite, a lawnmower, a baby carriage, a ball chased by a dog, their friends or their family. With the characters and action established, the child typically will add a front view of their house. The child draws the sun, traditionally in the upper right corner, then clouds are added. The clouds will be wholly original until they take on the stylization of the most common doodled

picture-graph symbol for clouds. The sun and clouds may then be personified, establishing the mood of the weather itself. Smiling suns bring in rainbows. The tree is added, then the knothole and a squirrel. Flowers spring up in repeated stylization.

This style is a typical development as the child creates her or his own individual drawing or painting. The progression often is repeated and serves as the foundational structure of the child's narrative habits. The "seeing parts as a whole" is the process of true integration. Teacher-directed discussions with children about their artwork emphasizes the interconnections of our curriculum goals with the child's own natural inclinations and interests. Children experience a cohesive overview when the products of her or his own endeavors are correlated into an understanding that merges their thoughts and feelings into an articulated expression.

Dewey's statement that identifies the pragmatic skills gained from music and art is fascinating for his recognition of the value that art has on the child's 'moral and aesthetic' development, but, more specifically, for his distinction of benefits "from a strictly intellectual point of view." Dewey's claim that he has "not spent a large amount of time" addressing art work does not seem to accurately reflect the text; that the book lacks overt references to the subject of art is true only to the extent that in *S & S* he has not labeled the issues, concerns and activities that he often discusses. One could even argue that Dewey goes out of his way not to categorize or label a major focus of *S & S,* that is: his emphasis on art and its use within the child's school life.

*Other Words for "Art"*

Dewey uses no fewer than fifty phrases, in the first chapter alone, that easily can be categorized as art activities. These phrases could be interpreted as partial definitions of art-making. Many of his other phrases substitute for art concepts. Dewey tends to describe activities rather than to identify the phrases, concepts and activities that in the schools of today would clearly be considered to be part of an art curriculum.

Dewey describes these activities as "first hand contacts with actualities" (*SS*, 1900, p. 11), or "methods of living and learning" (p. 14), or "things with a real motive behind and a real outcome ahead" (p. 12). All of these phrases partially define art. Dewey's characterization of "active work" (p. 16), "such work" (p. 13), or "various forms of active occupations" (p. 14) that "engage the full spontaneous interest and attention of the children" (p. 13) describe children involved in art-making. The "occupations which exalt personal responsibility and which train the child in relation to the physical realities of life" (p. 12) through "self-direction" (p. 7), in "articulating centers" (p. 15), to "produce something in the world" (p. 11), by "the processes employed" (p. 22), in "constructive work" (p. 17), are art "instrumentalities" (p. 14). The "familiar occupations" (p. 11), "household arts" (p. 13) and "mediums of action" are aspects of "the various forms of active occupations" (p. 18) that emerge and use the child's natural "buoyant outgoing energy" (p. 15). "Various forms of active occupations" (p. 19) involve the child's "mode of energy" (p. 8) and when they are

applied to “practical activities” (p. 18) become “things that are to produce results” (p. 17).

Dewey often connects science to art in related activities, quite naturally since experimentation and exploration are fundamental to both science and art. Both art and science offer “insights into the materials used and the mechanical principles involved” (*SS*, 1900. p. 20) and are based in “active centers of scientific insight into natural materials and processes” (p. 19). Both science and art serve as “instruments of effective self-direction” (p. 29) that develop the child’s “imagination and his sympathetic insight as to the social and scientific values found in his work” (p. 24). Dewey refers to “industrial occupations” (p. 10) and “manual training” (p. 8) with “materials and processes” (p. 19) in which “the intellectual and emotional interpretation of nature have been developed” (p. 19). The “practical devices or modes of routine employment” (p. 19 in doing “practical activities” (p. 18) of “human industry and achievement” (p. 19) are “what we do in and with the world” (p. 19). The “utilitarian conception” (p. 20) of “this sort of work” (p. 20) where the student is “working it out experimentally” (p. 21) is an “application of science in the use of our present available powers” (p. 21). “In connection with these occupations the historic development of man is recapitulated” (p. 20) in “practical impulse and disposition” (p. 27) that are applied through the “instincts of construction and production” (p. 24). By using these “self-directing factors” (p. 29) students “get control of symbols” (p. 26), and make “contact with realities” (p. 21). Near the end of the chapter Dewey

actually describes the activity, defining it with the word "art." The tasks are accomplished by means of the "impulses and tendencies to make, to do, to create, to produce, whether in the form of utility or of art" (p. 26).

I have drawn these euphemisms for art and related terms from the first chapter alone, and even these do not comprise a comprehensive list. Dewey refers to specific activities such as sewing, weaving, cooking, shopwork, shearing, carding, spinning, plying, "making of wicks and dipping candles" (*SS*, 1900, p. 10), woodworking and metalworking as all being utilities. In today's schools these activities would be categorized as aspects of an Art program.

*Dewey's Purpose in Engaging Children in Active Expression*

Dewey's stated purpose in *S & S* was to address the situation of the modern urban child's disconnection from the familiar activities and related connections that rural children experienced in their daily lives (*SS*, 1900, p. 11). By including the "occupations" in the school life of the child, Dewey saw how education could return children to a more natural state. Children on the family farm worked in the extraction and production of raw materials to create utilitarian goods. By engaging the children in activities that harnessed their imaginations, they could learn actively, rather than just sit at desks designed for them to recite memorized lessons.

Dewey emphasized how revolutionary this notion of the classroom was by recounting the very difficulty of finding furniture at a "school supply store in the city" that would encourage active learning. The dealer, concluding that Dewey was looking

for furniture for the children to work at, said the store had what schools normally requested: desks for the children to sit in and listen (*SS*, 1900, p. 31).

*Dewey's Motivation for Reform*

Dewey wanted quite literally to move children from passive listening into actively engaging in direct experiences through participatory exploration. Dewey did not classify these activities as art. As in *A as E,* this method also exalted the potential centrality for art in education, while dismissing the viability that art would become an educational foundation (*AE*, Dewey, 1934, p. 347). Even in *S & S,* 34 years earlier, the way Dewey presents art suggests that he feared parents, educators and society would consider a curriculum emphasizing art to be extremely liberal, "remote and repelling" (*AE,* p. 347). Thus Dewey's strategy seems to have been to isolate the components and describe their intellectual value whenever he presented an educational approach based on art activities.

In *Postscript: Three Years of the University Elementary School* Dewey dismisses the place of art, while paradoxically elevating its importance. His intellectual claims for art are almost an aside as if art-based education were an accepted common sense approach that was part of a common shared knowledge. Today, the wide range of school activities that Dewey sees as being essential to the shared educational goals would be considered aspects of an art-based curriculum. Perhaps he wanted to lure his audience into discussing the value of art in the lives of children and then encourage them to explore the philosophy of his art-based

pedagogy, without actually naming it, even to themselves. Dewey's list of benefits of art —enhancing attention, developing observation skills, recognizing sequential development, and becoming aware of how the parts relate to the whole— comprise four core principles on which to build an art-based curriculum.

*Focusing on the Individual Child*

Dewey suggests that, from a personal viewpoint, our interests in education naturally begin with "the individual child of our acquaintance" (*SS*, 1900, p. 6). Stressing the welfare of the child with whom adults identify most, Dewey drew his audience in, making them understand that only by "being true to the full growth of all the individuals" can society as a whole be "true to itself" (p. 7). His educational philosophy for the school encompasses all of society.

Dewey foresaw that the dawn of the twentieth century with its new technologies, advances in science, manufacturing and communication would influence changes in education as well as all other aspects of society. *S & S* presents art-making as an essential strategy to create surrogates within the schools for the "daily intimacies" inherent in farm life. He proposes that schools must offer "continual training of observation, of ingenuity, constructive imagination, of logical thought and the sense of reality acquired through first-hand contact with actualities" (*SS*, 1900, p. 11), in other words, through art-making.

For Dewey, traditional schools had failed by not offering "common and productive activities" (*SS*, 1900, p. 14). To compensate for students' lack of direct

social engagement, the school's social significance must be heightened. Educators, parents, and students would have to transform schools into a "genuine form of active community life" (p. 14). Schools needed to be restructured by "doing things that are to produce results" (p. 15) within "a spirit of free communication" (p. 14). In *A as E,* as in *S & S*, Dewey stresses that one develops intuition from experience —"the mother of all discipline worth the name" (*SS*, p.17).

*The Central Problem*

At the center of Dewey's presentation is the question of how curriculum is to retain the advantages of the "occupations," and yet introduce "something representing the other side of life —occupations which exact personal responsibilities and which train the child in relation to the physical realities of life?" (*SS*, 1900, p. 12). Perhaps Dewey's spoken tone betrayed the question as merely goading as several pages later he answers his own question by asserting that using the occupations develops "social power and insight" (p. 18). Through an "openness to the possibilities of the human spirit" (p. 18) education will find "liberation from the narrow utilities" and "make these practical school activities in the school allies of art and centers of science and history" (p. 18). In *S & S,* learning by doing is essential. Dewey proposes self-directed, child-centered, activities that engage a child's interest and motivates her or him to explore. By focusing attention, the mind truly assimilates information and connects concepts from previously gained knowledge. Through communicating experiences, communities form, identities grow and conceptions of the self and the

collective society develop. Dewey's vision demands this transformation for the microcosm of the classroom, as well as for the broadest reaches of civilization.

*Transforming Purpose and Understanding in the Development of Consciousness*

Dewey aligns himself with Plato in believing that "purpose, understanding, shall exist in the consciousness of the one who does the work" (*SS*, 1900, p. 23). Teaching science through applied science is an example that Dewey uses throughout his educational writings. The occupations, besides involving the child in direct activities, also are liberalized by "translation into the historic and social values and scientific equivalencies," thus becoming "a medium, an instrument, an *organ* [my emphasis] of understanding —and are thereby transformed" (p. 22). By being so engaged, children develop their imaginations and sympathetic insight while they are "trained in social directions, enriched by historical interpretation, controlled and illuminated by scientific methods" (p. 24). Dewey dismisses the prevailing view that manual training, art, and science "tend toward the production of specialists" (p. 26). He contends that "our present education" is based on a "mediaeval conception of learning," not on developing "our impulses and tendencies to make, to do, to create, to produce, whether in the form of utility or of art" (p. 26). He concludes the speech and chapter by declaring that "if our education is to have any meaning for life" it must undergo a "transformation" that he clearly believes "is already in progress" (p. 28). "The introduction of active occupations, of nature-study, of elementary science, of art, of history . . . with the instruments of effective self-direction" will foster a

"larger society which is worthy, lovely, and harmonious" (p. 29). Dewey surely intended the parents, faculty and others in the audience to rise to their feet applauding in approval of his very cordial, openhearted, lecture, undoubtedly intended for popular appeal. At this point in the program, donations to the school were solicited and welcomed. Dewey's Laboratory School celebrated its centennial in 1996 and is still based at the University of Chicago.

*Dewey's Prescription for Revolution*

In the second chapter of *The School and Society,* "The School and the Life of the Child" Dewey explains his use of the term "revolution" as a "shifting of the center of gravity" in which "the child becomes the sun about which the appliances of education revolve" (1900, p. 34). This very early reference to revolution by Dewey in relation to education mirrors his declaration in *A as E*: "But our revolt is in fact a reflection upon education that proceeds by methods so literal as to exclude the imagination and one not touching the desires and emotions of men" (*AE,* 1934, p. 347).

*S & S* reflects this same frustration when Dewey declared the coming shift in pedagogy aligns it with a "revolution, not unlike that introduced by Copernicus when the astronomical center shifted from the earth to the sun. In this case the child becomes the sun about which the appliances of education revolve" (*SS*, 1900, p. 34). The heart of child-centered education keeps "the life of the child centered and organized" (p. 36). Dewey saw this at the turn of the twentieth century; "the moment

children act they individualize themselves" (p. 35). Perhaps Dewey's perception of the lack of progress from 1899 to 1934 accounts for his disheartened tone of his only direct statement about applying art to education in *A as E* (1934, p. 347).

Dewey's instinct in *S & S,* not to isolate and name art as the means of unity, was cautionary. His reluctance to state directly that art is a means of individualization, may have been self-imposed by the thought that the educational establishment would dismiss child-centered education if it were founded on an art-based curriculum. He may have feared if his pedagogical methodology were characterized as centered on self-expression that he would be marginalized, and educators would be prone to dismiss his total message. Instead of categorizing the theory of *S & S* into a single definition, Dewey seems to have encoded the activities and attitudes of art exploration as a method for using one's mind to fully focus one's attention. Dewey envisioned and devised a process for experiencing all endeavors as educational ones and as natural extensions of living. This approach to learning and experiencing beats at the heart of *S & S* and *A as E*. *S & S* is undoubtedly child centered, while *A as E* focuses on the adult. Both present different stages of the individual life as a continuum. Acknowledging the human life span as an organic whole runs contrary to the way most adults view their childhood. *Schools of Tomorrow* begins with a quotation by Rousseau from *Emile* (1761): "We know nothing of childhood, and with our mistaken notions of it the further we go in education the more we go astray" (*ST*, 1915, p. 1). Adults, characteristically, seem to

relate to their own childhood as remote and distant experiences detached from the persons they have become. The view that an individual's life and education are an organic whole is reflected in Dewey's metaphor: "Mountain peaks do not float unsupported; they do not even just rest upon the earth. They are of the earth in one of its manifest operations" (*AE,* 1934, p. 3).

In *S & S* Dewey suggests "that we can direct the child's activities" to "satisfy an impulse or interest" with art as a "means to work it out" (*SS*, 1900, p. 37). "Working it out involves running up against obstacles, becoming acquainted with materials, exercising ingenuity, patience, persistence, alertness, it of necessity involves discipline –ordering of power– and supplies knowledge" (p. 37). This most certainly and properly defines the processes of art-making.

In *S & S,* Dewey's occupations such as the making "of flax, cotton, and wool fibers into clothing" (*SS*, 1900, p. 22) are recommended as educational activities. He offers other examples of manual production in which the children are making candles, cooking, weaving, sewing, working in wood and metal, and building a box. If elementary students today worked to create any of these projects, the activities would be classified as art. Perhaps in 1900 these traditional activities were so much a part of daily life that, even in a school setting, people did not think of them as being art.

*Dewey Declares Children's Instinct for Art-Making*

Toward the middle of Chapter II, Dewey argues that a child's use of pencil and paper is an "instinct" (*SS*, 1900, p. 40). He observes that "all children like to

express themselves through the medium of form and color" (p. 40). Dewey articulates the basic formula for art education when he says "let the child first express his impulse, and then through criticism, question, and suggestion bring him to consciousness" (p. 40). The work process consists of choices to be made, that have been made, as well as all the alternative choices that could have been made. The act of speculating on possible alternative outcomes continues the process. With instruction, children will draw "from combined observation, memory, and imagination" (p. 43).

Dewey claimed the universality for artists of all ages when he responded to a seven-year old's drawing, "it seems to me to have as much poetic feeling as the work of an adult" (*SS*, 1900. p. 43). Dewey identifies "the expressive impulse of children" as the "art instinct," which grows "out of the communicating and constructive instincts" (p. 44). More directly, he notes that "children simply like to do things and watch to see what will happen" (p. 44). A perfect example is watercolor painting in which children channel their creative impulse, often determining the subject of their paintings as they watch the paint move.

*Dewey Declares the Language Instinct and Resulting Social Dimension*

Dewey perceived the social dimensions of children creating individually within a group. In describing children sharing their art, Dewey identified the place and power of articulation: "The *language instinct* is the simplest form of the social

expression of the child. Hence it is a great, perhaps the greatest of all educational resources" (*SS*, 1900, p. 43). Children's language develops through their creations as their own artwork is a subject they love to talk about. In that desire to communicate the meaning of their creations, children expand their verbal communication skills. With guidance, these efforts to express themselves offer the teacher great opportunities to shape the child's grammar usage, practice pronunciation skills and expand the child's vocabulary. Dewey expressed how art relates to language in an elementary program when he directs, "make the construction adequate, make it full, free, and flexible, give it a social motive, something to tell, and you have a work of art" (p. 44).

*Dewey's Fourfold Interests*

"The art impulse is connected mainly with the social instinct –the desire to tell, to represent" (*SS*, 1900, p. 47). Dewey identifies the "fourfold interests" of art-making as: (a) "The interest in conversation, or communication;" (b) "Inquiry, or finding things out;" (c) "Making things, or construction;" and (d) "Artistic expression" (p. 47). These four interests are "the natural resources, the uninvested capital," on which the "active growth of the child" depends (p. 48). Children's

artwork combines "observation, memory, and imagination" (p. 43) that develops with "the instinct of investigation" and then grows with a "combination of the constructive impulse with the conversational" (p. 44). "The result is that the child always has something in his mind to talk about" (p. 56) through a process of "drawing inferences, of acute observation and in continuous reflection" (p. 54). Dewey sees the "incomparable *organ* [my emphasis] of instruction" (*AE,* p. 347) exemplified in the child making art. Individuality is enhanced as a child's artwork manifests "a thought to express, and a thought is not a thought unless it is one's own" (*SS*, p. 56). Harmonizing Dewey's ideas can productively create a view of the "learning instinct" and allow us to develop guidelines that may serve as compasses to navigate the currents of our teaching philosophy.

*Artwork as the Perfect Embodiment of the Child's Imagination*

In only one statement does Dewey perhaps devalue children's artwork: "The real child, it hardly need be said, lives in a world of imaginative values and ideas which find only imperfect outward embodiment" (*SS*, 1900, p. 60). Dewey insightfully recognizes the central role that imagination plays in the life of a child. However, the characterization of a child's artwork as an "imperfect outward

embodiment" (p. 60) seems disconnected to the child's perspective as an artist. The child's representations of their "world of imaginative values and ideas" is perhaps the only artwork that attains perfection as children very often accept their artwork as perfect. Dewey was most likely thinking only of the adult and adult values of judging the effectiveness of technical execution. His statement does not reflect children's relationship to art-making where, through uncritical intentionality, a child's art does reach perfection in the child's own eyes. Only the artist can ultimately determine if her or his artwork was successful, and it would be a rare adult artist that reached complete acceptance of the object of her or his expression. Yet, a five-year-old often will view her or his paintings and drawings joyfully, without a thought of criticism. That is the only characterization that I find fault with in this visionary work. *S & S* and *C & C* should be required reading for all classroom teachers, from early childhood instruction to the graduate level.

*Dewey's Quest for Pedagogical Unity*

Dewey's quest for unity in pedagogy does not mean merely among the various subjects to be taught, which is what educators today usually mean by unity within the curriculum. Dewey means an encompassing unity throughout a child's education,

kindergarten through graduate school. He seeks to unify education throughout the full lifespan of the learner. Dewey sought an overarching vision as inclusive and fundamental as Einstein's unified field theory. Dewey would apply this to "any realm in which judgment is required for human understanding" (Ryan, 1995, p. 151). He isolates the creative components of his proposed curriculum without identifying them collectively as this unifying force. My reading is that Dewey hesitates to declare art the means of unification, fearing that the suggestion of art centered education will be so outside the accepted practices of teaching and learning that the pervading educational establishment would reject his pedagogy without consideration. I believe this is Dewey's meaning in the call for a "revolt" against methods that exclude "desires and emotions" (*AE,* 1934, p. 347).

In these 1899 lectures, Dewey very clearly articulates his conception of a new pedagogy based on learning through doing. His experiential methodology deploys social engagement, using scientific principles to develop practical skills in creative activities. Social engagement necessarily fosters language growth and guides the acquisition of concepts and ideas that further develops each child's perceptual skills and intuition.

*The Place of Imagination in the Life of the Child*

When Dewey responds to a literal-minded educational system that denies "the imagination and desires" (*AE*, 1934, p. 347), the urgency for a revolution in pedagogy takes over (*AE,* p. 347). In Chapter II of *S & S*, "The School and the Life of the Child," Dewey explores the range and meaning of imagination in the lives of children and in their learning experiences. Dewey eloquently reflects on the relationship between school and the child's greater life: "Why are we so hard of heart and so slow to believe? The imagination is the medium in which the child lives" (*SS*, 1900, p. 61). Dewey compellingly pleads, "If we once believe in life and in the life of the child, then will all the occupations and uses spoken of, then will all history and science, become instruments of appeal and materials of culture to his imagination, and through that to the richness and orderliness of his life" (p. 61). Dewey is saying, if "we" believe in children, in who they are, then the best and most fulfilling education that can be offered allows children to explore all history and science by engaging their imaginations as they express their own artistic natures.

As a pedagogical practice, Dewey encourages presenting history through imaginative play. In one activity, he challenges children to imagine themselves living

in caves and experiencing "nature first hand" (*SS*, 1900, p. 48). "Then they go on in imagination through the hunting to the semi-agricultural stage, and through a nomadic stage to the settled agricultural stage" (p. 53). Within the exercise the children create the tools they need for each historical setting. As they move chronologically they come to the age when wool is first spun and cotton cloth first woven. This historic imaging and scientific investigation first identifies the need, and then —through discussion, research and experimentation— the children find the solutions that will lead to cultural development.

*Smelting and Memories (That Might Be) Best Forgotten*

Recounting one such exercise to the parents, Dewey boasts that the students have constructed a "smelting oven made out of clay and of considerable size" (*SS*, 1900, p. 53). Fire! "As the children did not get their drafts right at first, the mouth of the furnace not being in proper relation to the vent as to size and position, instruction in the principles of combustion, the nature of drafts and of fuel, was required" (p. 53). Dewey calmly informs the parents that their children have been experimenting with combustible fuels and burning them so that their smelting oven "of considerable size" would heat up properly. This confession that a school engaged in such an activity is

unimaginable in light of today's safety standards, liability clauses, parental permission forms, and legal opinions. Yet Dewey, seemingly oblivious to possible criticism, recounts that the children of the Laboratory School were smelting copper, progressing it "through a series of experiments, fusing it, working it into objects, and the same experiments were made with lead and other materials." How could his audience keep from mentally picturing the potential disaster as bubbling liquid metal splatters molten magma towards their own children! How many health and environmental regulations would this makeshift smelting violate in today's schools? Some Chicagoans, at least, must have shared a heightened sense of potential incendiary consequences: the great 1871 fires must have still been persistent in their collective memory. They understandably might have run Dewey out of town on a rail.

In 1974 as a student teacher in a kindergarten I nearly was dismissed from the school due to a slight miscalculation involving my mom's portable oven in a well intended attempt to bake cup-cakes in the classroom. Excess batter overflowed the muffin tins spilling onto the oven's heating elements: a whiff of something burning and just a bit of white smoke triggered the Principal to storm into the room in a panicky rage.

Had I known of Dewey's little lesson plan, I might have argued that at least the students and I were not smelting iron ore and pouring it into sand molds as the revered John Dewey did. Somehow both Dewey's and my own fledging careers survived questionable judgment, enthusiastic inexperience and overzealous lesson plans.

*Dewey Identifies the Lifespan of Childhood*

Dewey yearns for his readers to reconnect to their own childhoods, to rediscover themselves. "If we identify ourselves with the real instincts and needs of childhood . . . the culture of adult life shall all come in their due season" (*SS*, 1900, p. 60). "Life is the great thing after all;" Dewey reflects "the life of the child at its time and in its measure no less than the life of the adult" (p. 60).

*Conclusion: Out on a Limb*

Is John Dewey a fox, calculating and cunning, enticing his reader to think what he will not say: that possibly the answer to a unified theory of education can be achieved through the individual student's artistic creation? Artistic creation could be Dewey's unifying force to bridge the experiences of education across the subjects and the grade levels in a guided curriculum. Breaking *A as E* down to its most essential

conclusion brings Dewey's thoughts of experience through art sharply into focus as an encompassing educational philosophy. Education is the subject of *A as E,* that Dewey does not mention until the third to the last page when he tells us that the educational establishment would be repelled by the thought of art as the unifying element (*AE*, 1934, p. 347). Thirty-four years earlier in *S & S* he deployed very nearly the opposite strategy. Whereas in *A as E* Dewey addressed education in the guise of art; in *S & S* Dewey explores art but under the banner of education. In both collections, Dewey employs the same structure, the same game plan but reverses the strategy: write about Art as education without naming it, discuss experiencing through art-making without calling it Education.

The repetitions in *A as E* very likely spring from Dewey compiling seven related lectures with little evident effort to integrate them into a cohesive monograph. Overlapping themes and redundant examples abound. *S & S,* comprised of three lectures, likewise shows little attempt to collate very similar ideas into a fluid whole. Although Dewey does not attempt to consolidate very similar themes from a range of activities, his ideas clearly evolve in scope as he applies them. The attentive reader even may refine his ideas further, taking personal experiences into consideration.

Perhaps through revisiting the themes and seeing how Dewey develops them, the reader gradually accepts, identifies, and begins to share Dewey's synthetic vision. By invoking a common sense, pragmatic approach, Dewey encourages readers to relate to art from their own experiences as art-makers as well as viewers.

*A as E* traces how art communicates, revealing a personal subconscious as well as a universal consciousness. He sees art uniting people throughout history in a progression of independent revelations. For Dewey society is developing as people continually process the essential nature of our humanity and reveal it through our collective art. Dewey concludes *A as E* bitterly, sarcastically, even despondently. But he issues a hopeful challenge to future teachers, artists, students, and spectators, charging them to engage pedagogy through art, "the incomparable *organ* [my emphasis] of instruction" (*AE,* 1934, p. 347).

*Conceptual Reversals: Art for Education and Education for Art*

In 1899 Dewey repeatedly asks what factor, quality or method would unite curriculum making it cohesive and relevant to the learner as he gives examples of activities that bring teaching and learning together. By describing processes without categorizing or naming them, Dewey coaxes his readers to explore and consider his

ideas without the knee-jerk rejection that he expected the very concept of art-based curriculum to trigger. In *A as E* he describes the experience of art as an actual manifestation, expression and discovery, that validates the experience of art for the viewer and maker, whether it is an individual personal viewer and maker, or an anonymous artist and unknown observer. Significantly, Dewey approaches the same issue from an opposite position in each book. In 1900 and 1902 he describes the ideal education without specifying that it is art-based. Yet in 1934 he describes how people learn as they experience art without calling the process education. *S & S* explores education through art without calling the process art-making; *A as E* ponders how people experience art, without identifying it as essentially an educational process.

*Dewey's Dream of "The School of the Future, the One We Hope, Sometime, to Have"*

In chapter III of *S & S,* "Waste in Education," Dewey reiterates his theme of the "lack of unity in the aims of education" and the "lack of coherence in its studies and methods" (1900, p. 64). As a solution Dewey presents kindergarten as a pedagogical model based on "the natural interests of the child" (p. 68). Dewey wants his listener and reader to counter the "fundamental lack of unity" (p. 72) with "the ideas, interests, and activities" that are part of the child's "everyday experience" (p.

75), and incorporate them into a "free interaction between all the parts of the school system" (p. 78). Dewey argues that the "theory of practical activities" (p. 79) "responds to the child's need for action," and that expression should "be constructive and creative, rather than simply passive and conforming" (p. 80). With Dewey's new philosophy for schools he also creates a metaphor of causality and experience that he can apply to society as a whole.

Dewey sees that "relations to the outside world are found in the carpentry and textile shops" (*SS*, 1900, p. 84). The work in shops connects students to traditional country life, and to the source of the country life materials "with physics . . . the science of applying energy, with commerce and distribution," and "with art in the development of architecture and decoration" (p. 84). Educationally, he groups together the whole range of workshop activities as "all-important in interpreting and expanding experience" (p. 85) and engaging the scientific method.

In *S & S,* Dewey most directly characterizes the role of art when he states: "drawing and music, or the graphic and auditory arts, represent the culmination, the idealization, the highest point of refinement of all the work carried on" (1900, p. 86). This statement soundly endorses an art-based pedagogy. In that quotation Dewey

seems to abandon his cloaking technique of encoding this dominant themes of *S & S*. He tackles the role of art within the schools: "A spirit of union gives vitality to the art and depth and richness to the other work" (p. 89). "This union is symbolized by saying that in the ideal school the art work might be considered to be that of the shops, passed through the alembic of library and museum into action again" (p. 89). Libraries and museums can have this alembic effect of purifying, altering and transforming the manual activities into art-making. "Art involves . . . the *organs* [my emphasis] of expression" (p. 89).

Dewey uses the example of "the textile room as an illustration of such a synthesis" where "the children come into immediate connection with the materials." The activities' "origin, history, their adaptation to particular uses" come into play when "dealing with the problems involved, both theoretical and practical" (*SS*, 1900. p. 89). Dewey then clarifies: "I am talking about a future school, the one we hope, sometime, to have" (p. 89). Dewey diagrams this future school with the museum at the center. Laboratories for art, music, biology, and physical and chemical laboratories are connected to the central museum's four corners (*SS*, Chart IV). He muses poetically that, "all studies arise from aspects of the one earth and the one life

lived upon it" (p. 91). Dewey argues that "the synthesis of art, science, and industry" along with a "procession of related facts which have been translated into terms of art" and "a synopsis of the historical evolution" (p. 90) must be "applied in everyday life, to make the school an organic whole" (p. 91).

To educate most effectively and for long-term value, "the problem is to unify, to organize, education, to bring all its various factors together, through putting it as a whole into organic union with everyday life" (*SS*, 1900, p. 92). Dewey's model pivots on this "unification, extending from work beginning with the four-year-old child up through the graduate work of the University" (p. 92). Dewey could be paraphrased as promoting an educational model that is the equivalent of *kindergarten for life.*

*Dewey Develops Divisions for His Stages of Development*

In chapter IV of *S & S*, "The Psychology of Elementary Education," Dewey sees the perception of the mind as changing, with the view that the mind is "a growing affair" that alters at "distinctive phases" (1900, p. 102). These alterations and adaptations "are all one and the same in the sense of continuity of life" (p. 102). Dewey's "Stages of Growth" are echoed in Jean Piaget's "Stages of Development" and may well be one of the primary sources upon which Piaget based his

classification of growth stages. Vygotsky's age divisions in "Zones of Proximal Development" likewise coincide with those Dewey proposes. When Dewey presented these lectures Piaget and Vygotsky were two years old. Although Victor Lowenfeld in *Creative and Mental Growth* (1947) refined the developmental distinctions by adding a younger age bracket of two to four-year-olds to his "Stages of Growth and Development," the age categories, otherwise are similar to those Dewey's proposed. Lowenfeld does not refer to Dewey, but lists Piaget ten times in his index. Dewey refers to Schelling who is credited with establishing "Stages of Consciousness," but without specific age categories. Schelling, who died five year before Dewey was born, recognized two themes that Dewey addresses in *S & S:* (a) Humans learn from the physical world, and (b) Unity exists in nature (p. 68).

Dewey acknowledges that Schelling recognized the value of play in learning, which forms a foundation for kindergarten. However, Dewey feels that Schelling's followers "made an obstruction" between kindergarten and "the rest of the school system," and effectively "brought about isolations" (*SS*, 1900, p. 67). In chapter V of *S & S,* "Froebel's Educational Principals," Dewey credits Froebel with trying to extend the principles of kindergarten throughout a child's schooling (p. 117). With

the expanding knowledge of "physiological and psychological facts and principles of child growth" (p. 121), Dewey strongly believes that Froebel's vision is scientifically justified. Froebel is surely Dewey's source for the choice of use of the word "occupations" to describe children when they are engaged in activities. Froebel is accepted as the founder of kindergarten, he died seven years before Dewey was born.

*Contemporaries' Conceptions of Developmental Age Groupings*

1857 Fredrick Froebel dies, who is accepted as the Father of Kindergarten

1859 John Dewey is born

1864 Death of Friedrich Wilhelm Schelling, who developed:
"Stages of Consciousness"

1896 Jean Piaget is born, will develop: "Stages of Children's Development"

1896 Lev S. Vygotsky is born, will develop: "Zones of Proximal Development"

1899 Dewey delivers lectures that will be published as:
*Postscript: Three Years of the University Elementary School*

1899 Dewey delivers lectures that will be published as:
*The School and the Society* (1900)

1901 Dewey delivers lectures that will be published:
*The Child and the Curriculum* (1902)

1903 Victor Lownefeld is born, will develop:
"Stages of Children's Growth & Development"

Dewey describes and defines the "Stages of Growth" as: (a) Four to eight years of age, "characterized by directness of social and personal interests" reflected in the "relationship between impressions, ideas, and action" (*SS*, 1900, p. 105) that emphasize "pictorial imagination and conversation" (p. 106). The teacher directs information to the "child's own experience" with an "intimate connection between knowing and doing" (p. 106). (b) Eight to eleven or twelve-years-old: The child develops a "growing sense of the possibility of more permanent and objective results" and control (p. 107) through "constructive imagination" and "expanding consciousness" (p. 108). The "three Rs" must be presented in the context of the child's own experience to "prevent the symbols from becoming purely second-hand" (p. 112). Dewey recommends a curriculum based on "direct modes of activity, constructive and occupational work, scientific observation, experimentation" (p. 113) that will "present plenty of opportunity and occasions for the necessary use of reading, writing, and number work" (p. 113) "as organic outgrowth of the child's experience" (p. 113). A curriculum that fits that definition would be the model of the philosophy of art-based pedagogy.

Dewey does not specify the age level of his third category, but if continued

from the second category, the individual at the start of the stage would be twelve or thirteen and is "upon the borderland of secondary" education (*SS*, 1900, p. 115). Because the Laboratory School does not focus on this age group, Dewey dedicates little time to this stage. As children develop thought, inquiry, and activity "children can be brought to and through this period" (p. 115) "with a positive enlargement of life, and a wider, freer, and more open outlook upon it" (p. 115). Dewey still employs the same values of active engagement, and students, having internalized the process and activities, are prepared to keep learning throughout life.

*Dewey's Contemporaries & Age Groupings*

Although Dewey, along with later scholars, Schelling, Piaget, Vygotsky, and Lowenfeld all explain the rationale of how they formed their categories, these age divisions still seem strangely arbitrary. Grouping four-year-olds with eight-year-olds is so broad a classification, that they share little more than being older than three and younger than nine. Of course, as with any age child, they can be assessed as sharing humanity, desiring companionship and seeking fulfillment emotionally, intellectually, verbally, and physically. But the differences within the age groupings are so vast that observations about the relationship of the individuals would be so general as to make

any conclusions vague at best. However, comparing four-year-olds to six-year-olds can meaningfully broaden our understanding of the each age as would comparing a six-year-old to an eight-year-old. But in comparing a four-year-old to an eight-year-old all assessments would conclude is that the eight-year-old is twice as old, and is far more adept at any quantifiable task. In the realm of creative ability, the five-year-old stands the equal of any person at any age. But that assessment would be qualitative, based on preference and prejudice; it would be strictly subjective and not based on any verifiable means.

*Last Chapters of School and Society*

The last four chapters of *S & S* are briefer and most of the ideas presented in them Dewey already has covered in the preceding chapters. In chapter V, "Frobel's Educational Principles," Dewey continues to examine the child's use of the imagination, while cautioning that a child "without intellectual hunger" may withdraw in a "flight from the world of reality into a make-believe land" (1900, p. 112). To avoid this loss, the child's greatest resource, the imagination, must be actively engaged. Through imaginative play "the cluster of suggestions, reminiscences, and anticipations" (p. 123) direct the child's interests toward the goals

of the curriculum. If students' imaginations are not channeled toward interacting, the child can "become blasé" (p. 126). But if the curricular activities offer "paths for exploration," that continually are diverse and have "both definiteness and elasticity" (p. 127), then the child will "maintain his natural hunger" for "things of direct experience" (p. 126). By utilizing "the child's own impulse" the teacher can "bring to full consciousness" (p. 130) "the full development of the child's powers, and thus keep him always prepared, and ready, for the next work he has to do" (p. 131).

In chapter VI, "The Psychology of Occupations," Dewey returns to themes he introduced in chapters I, II and III. He focuses on the child's spontaneous interests and sense-observations to develop "discipline in thought" and "sense-training" (*SS*, 1900, p. 134). Dewey sees that "interest grows out of some instinct" (p. 136), and the effective teacher must harness the child's attention.

In chapter VII, "The Development of Attention," Dewey defines imagination as "a constructive way of dealing with any subject-matter under the influence of a pervading idea" (*SS*, 1900, p. 144). As an example, he suggests applying "the practical attitude of making and using cameras to the consideration of the problems intellectually involved in this –to principles of light, angular measurements, etc.,

which give the theory of explanation of the practice" (p. 147). Dewey's example with the camera illustrates how general theories can be drawn from practical activities, and offer a deeper realization of the interrelation between art and science. For Dewey, "reflective attention" involves "judging, reasoning, [and] deliberation" in response to the child's own questions. This method prescribes active engagement to create possible solutions (p. 148). "What appeals to the mind as a whole" Dewey observes, is a "psychological affair" of interest and attention directed by the child's "self-sufficient center" (p. 142).

In his last chapter, "The Aim of History in Elementary Education," Dewey perceptively recognized that a child's "interest in his history gives a more human coloring, a wider significance, to his own study of nature" (*SS*, 1900, p. 153). This reinforces the value that Dewey places on recreating the past through imaginative play. To create an imaginative catalyst, Dewey suggests Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* as source material for third or fourth graders (p. 155). This struck a resonant chord from my own childhood.

When I was in first grade my father read me a children's version of *Robinson Crusoe* I had chosen at the school's book fair. Later my father and I experienced the

*Crusoe* story together when we went fishing and on nature outings. Once when we found natural clay in a lakeshore embankment, I fashioned pots and a pitcher like the ones illustrated in my book. My father and I discussed their possible firing, recalling Crusoe's experiments and failures. For our entire lives together Crusoe served us as a model and guide of self-reliance and ingenuity. Dewey's example of using *Robinson Crusoe* to develop imaginative exploration is a perfect instance of how the literary arts can foster historical understanding and encourage imaginative inventions.

### *The Child and the Curriculum*

The *Child and the Curriculum* is a separate work that is coupled with *The School and Society*. Dykhuizen refers to them as "two small books" (Dykhuizen, 1973, p. 94). Due to its essay length, *C & C* often is printed with *S & S*, and it explores similar themes. *C & C* could serve as an additional chapter to *S & S*. Although both works share many ideas, Dewey does examine a few new thoughts.

Dewey begins *C & C* by defining the child as an "immature, undeveloped being" (*CC*, 1902, p. 182). The "educative process as a whole" is to create an interaction with "certain social aims, meanings and values," not to be structured as a conflict of the "child vs. curriculum," or as the "individual nature vs. social culture" (p. 183). Academic subjects should encompass the "science of the ages" and extend into the infinite "world of space and time" to create individual "practical and

emotional bonds of child life" (p. 185). Perhaps, because he is trying to woo the masses to his philosophy, Dewey speaks very clearly. "Learning is active. It involves reaching out of the mind. It involves organic assimilation starting from within." The child and not the subject matter "determines both quality and quantity of learning" (p. 187). To succeed we must "abandon the notion of subject-matter as something fixed" and "realize that the child and the curriculum are simply two limits which define a single process" (p. 189). Success depends on "continuous reconstruction, moving from the child's present experience out into that represented by the organized bodies of truth that we call studies" (p. 189).

The concern for the child should focus on the child's inclinations, purposes, and experiences that "culminate power and interest" to meet our curriculum goals (*CC*, 1902, p. 192). Dewey inverts the traditional order of the subject matter being revealed to the child when he declares: "the subject-matter of science and history and art serves to reveal the real child to us" (p. 194). This reversal focusing on the revelation of the child is a true transformation of educational priorities, and is one of the greatest gifts of Dewey in consideration of the design of curriculum for children.

Dewey offers a metaphor of the student's journey as an "individual explorer's life" with the "finished map" (*CC*, 1902, p. 197) being revealed after "temporal circumstances and accidents of their original discovery" (p. 198). "The map is not a substitute for a personal experience," nor does it "take the place of the actual journey" (p. 198). The map in Dewey's analogy is "a summary, an arranged and orderly view

of previous experiences" that serves "as a guide to future experience" (p. 198). The Map provides direction, "Pointing out the paths that lead most quickly and most certainly to a desired result" (p. 198). In Dewey's map imagery, he documents the path of a child's educational journey, as well as suggesting how our curriculum goals must guide and encourage the child's exploration.

In my own teaching, after I finished my MFA in painting, I taught children in a range of age groups at a museum art school, located on a lagoon off a river with an adjoining park. I usually taught a course I created, "Artist Explorers." We literally implemented Dewey's metaphor in a historical context as 15th through 19th century explorers charting a new world. After nature hikes we returned to the classroom and created paintings drawn from our experiences, both real and imagined. From our observations as naturalists we catalogued the flora and fauna we had encountered. We created artist-explorer logs and made faux parchment maps that we discussed at the end of the course, relating them to our own life journeys.

In the Artist-Explorer classes we strove to do what Dewey describes in *C & C* as "psychologizing" the "immediate and individual experiences" (*CC*, 1902, p. 200), by combining scientific and artistic discovery with "the double aspect of subject matter" (p. 201) while creating art based on each "child's present experience" (p. 202).

*Dewey Defines his "Three Evils" and Offers "Three Aspects of Recourse"*

Whenever the subject matter is not "translated into life-terms," Dewey charges that curriculum is harboring three "evils" (*CC*, 1900, p. 202). As the first evil, Dewey asserts that curriculum has betrayed the "lack of any organic connection with what the child has already seen and felt and loved" (p. 202). Therefore the child perceives the material as "purely formal and symbolic" (p. 202). If symbols and subject matter are "induced from without" they can become "dead and barren" to the child (p. 202).

Dewey defines the "second evil" as arising from a "lack of motivation" that is triggered when a teacher presents curriculum to a child using "external" examples, alien to the child's experience. The failure springs from the lesson lacking "a significant position in the child's life." When the lesson grows out of "tendencies and activities" that are present in the child's life it "supplies motive for the learning" and the "truth in question" can "be mastered" (*CC*, 1902, p. 203).

Dewey views the "third evil" as the lesson losing its "quality" by being "presented in an external, ready-made fashion," in which the "thought-provoking character is obscured" (*CC*, 1902, p. 204). The evil plaguing the presentation of subject matter is that the child's "faculty of abstraction and generalization are not adequately developed" and "the logic of the child is hampered and mortified" (p. 204). Dewey concludes this litany of "evils" optimistically by summarizing: "Somehow and somewhere motive must be appealed to, connection must be

established between the mind and its materials" for there to be an "expanding consciousness of the child" (p. 205).

Ever the progressive optimist, Dewey addresses these evils with "three aspects of recourse." First, the teacher must generate interest as "some kind of working relation to the mind" that "must be discovered and elaborated" (*CC*, 1902, p. 207). Second, the "lesson is rendered interesting" through "contrast effects" when the teacher introduces "contrast with some alternative experience" (p. 207). Dewey succinctly pronounces "action is response; it is adaptation, and adjustment" (p. 208). He concludes *C & C* with the third recourse stated as a reassuring principle: "Let the child's nature fulfill its own destiny, revealed to you in whatever of science and art and industry the world now holds as its own" (p. 209). Let children discover their relationship with the world by directly experiencing and exploring it. Then they will discover that they have embarked on a lifelong process of self-discovery, learning and sharing.

*S & S, Postscript* and *C & C* comprise some of Dewey's earliest publications on art and education. Collectively, the ideas in these works provide a strong rationales and a solid foundation for an effective art-based curriculum. In the next chapter I will survey Dewey's related ideas in the years between 1910 and 1934. My goal is to provide insight on what Dewey says and trace the influences on him, to deepen our understanding of how he formed the ideas that lead him to create the philosophy of *Art as Experience.*

*Note for Chapter II*

*Anomaly: A Limitation of Space or Time?*

If one were reading both the University of Chicago's printing of the 1915 revised edition of *The School and Society* and *The Child and the Curriculum* published together in one volume in 1990 —my personal preference due to the inclusion of Philip Jackson's "Introduction" and Dewey's own *Postscript: Three Years of the University Elementary School*— and the 2001 Dover Publication of this same revised edition one would distinguish two sets of anomalies. Other differences between these two publications may exist, but I have only found these two. The variations are odd since they both purport to be from the same revision. The anomaly may seem minor:

In the University of Chicago edition: "I *do not have space* [my emphasis] to speak of the work of the older children, where the original crude instincts of construction and communication have been developed into something like scientifically directed inquiry . . ." (*SS*, 1900, p. 57).

The same section in the Dover publication reads: "I *shall not have time* [my emphasis] to speak of the work of the older children, where the original crude instincts of construction and communication have been developed into something like scientifically directed inquiry. . ." (*SS*, [Dover] 1900, p. 36).

Changing the constraint from *space* to *time* is curious and a bit of a mystery since the deviation does not seem to be a noted revision by Dewey and may merely be a change the publishing house made. The deviation is repeated in the next paragraph.

In the University of Chicago's publication: "If I had not taken so much *space* [my emphasis] in my other illustrations, I should like to show how, beginning with very simple material things, the children are led on to larger fields of investigation and to the intellectual discipline that is the accompaniment of such research" (*SS*, 1900, p. 58).

In the Dover publication the passage appears as: "If I had not taken so much *time* [my emphasis] in my other illustration . . . " (SS, [Dover] 1900, p. 36).

The change would be a natural one since Dewey transcribed his lecture from the stenographic report –going from a speech involving an audience's *time* to a text taking physical page *space*. If the change of *space* to *time* reflected a change from the 1902 edition to the 1915 edition (which it does not) –the substitution would make sense, as Dewey in 1902 at 42 years of age would think of space as the limitation, while in 1915 at 55, his age at the time of the revised edition, Dewey understandably would think of the limitation as being foremost of time.

# CHAPTER III:

# JOHN DEWEY, ART AND EDUCATION: 1910 -1934

# AND THE INFLUENCE OF ALBERT C. BARNES

## *Developing Influences and Views*

Dewey's prior articles and books before *A as E* that included the subject of art and education reflect the events and people that influenced his aesthetic philosophy. To trace some of these major developments an examination of his summary on the history of the role of art in teaching and learning is necessary. "Art in Education," published in the *Cyclopedia of Education* (1910) is one of Dewey's last publications on the theme before three new influences entered his life in late 1916 and the fall 1917.

### *"Art in Education"*

In the short article, "Art in Education," Dewey declares that art always played a significant role in the life of communities and has historical importance in "determining progress" (*MW*, Dewey, 1978, p. 375). He dismisses the common materialist assumption that art served merely as "a kind of educational luxury and superfluity" (p. 375). Rather, Dewey emphasized the significance of how humans used "psycho-physical" sources to create the "enduring modifications in natural objects" (p. 375) that are defined as art. While "enduring modifications" may seem to be a dispassionate term to describe some of the greatest achievements of the human

spirit, the remaining art in the form of these physical manipulations are the finest connections to our distant ancestors' humanity. The physicality of art exists as the chiseled rock, the modem of clay modeled and intensely fired to seal a glaze, or the acumination of malleable material applied in dabs and strokes of plastic color on a cave or stucco wall: These artistic remains are Dewey's "enduring modifications in natural objects" (p. 375).

Dewey argues that art is born in primal impulses whose social value communicates "emotional moods favorable to joint or concerted action" (*MW*, 1978, p. 376). Cultural identities grew out of "the role of the dramatic and communal arts" (p. 376). Dewey regrets "the great loss in relegating the arts to the relatively trivial role which they finally assumed in schooling" (p. 377). Dewey revisits the theme of the trivial place of art in education that he had developed in *The School and Society* (1900) and *The Child and the Curriculum* (1902) and foreshadows his call in *Art as Experience* for a revolution that will compensate for the lost opportunities that utilizing art as a central means of teaching and learning offers (*AE*, Dewey, 1934, p.347).

In Dewey's summary in "Art and Education," despite his seeming resignation to the deplorable place of art in education, he sees a "corresponding promise of gain in the efforts making [being made] in the last generation to restore these to a more important position" (*MW*, 1978, p. 377) as art "represent not luxuries and superfluities, but fundamental forces of development" (p. 377). Although Dewey saw the promise of an emphasis on art in schools as growing in 1910, by 1934 he viewed

the need for increased inclusion of art in education as being so urgent as to require a revolt against "methods so literal as to exclude the imagination" and "not touching the desires and emotions" (*AE,* 1934, p. 347). In the "Art and Education" article Dewey encourages educators to seize opportunities to use art in the classroom. He asserts that "expressive activity is also especially adapted for educational use in that the separation, so usual with adults, between the utilitarian and the artistic does not naturally exist for them [children]" (*MW*, p. 378). Again he stresses the unifying quality of art within the curriculum: "The chief functions of the arts in education" are to enhance school's "social importance" through art's "strong emotional appeal" (p. 378). He claimed that art facilitates social enhancement by creating a "proper medium of feeling and imagination" within the school setting (p. 379). Dewey emphasizes the practical arts as well as the fine arts and notes that literature is the art form "most generally available for school purposes" (p. 378). Literature is "not just as means to an end," but by expressing the "inchoate elements of experience" (p. 378), literature provides students the tools to explore our shared history and experience.

This essay was Dewey's last published writing directed to art and education prior to meeting Barnes. The emphasis at the end of the article is on literature. *A as E*'s emphasis is on painting. The change in emphasis is directly due to the influence of Barnes.

### *Barnes's Influence on Dewey's Art Experience*

In 1917 two new students entered Dewey's evening seminar, Ethics and Educational Problems, at Columbia University (Martin, 2002, p. 279). Albert Combs

Barnes, a wealthy eccentric who made his fortune by developing Argyrol eye drops was one of these students. He joined the class without enrolling (Dearborn, 1988, p. 98), Barnes was developing a devotion to education as he was becoming increasingly devoted to his art collection. With Dewey's influence and guidance Barnes would bring these two passions together.

For the next two years Barnes continued to attend Dewey's evening classes as a non-paying student (Schack, 1963, p. 107). Dewey's most recent book, *Democracy and Education* (1916), had stirred Barnes "as no other book ever had" (Anderson, 2003, p. 26). Barnes told Dewey that he was eager to apply the philosopher's educational principles to his discussions with his factory workers (Schack, p. 100).

Barnes, at this time, was continuing to avidly purchase modern French paintings, and was seeking to legitimize his investment in them and to substantiate his artistic judgment. In the years to come, Barnes would lean "heavily on Dewey to support and to rescue his private museum from public condemnation and castigation by art critics for its unusually elitist approach to art education" (Dalton, 2002, p. 12). Barnes had amassed "an unsurpassed collection of modern French art" (Dearborn, 1988, p. 98), unrivaled by any collection in America, containing works of "modern French painters such as Cezanne, Renoir, Picasso, Matisse, Monet, and Degas" (Dykhuizen, 1973, p. 222). Although Picasso was Spanish, he was an instrumental force in modern French painting.

Barnes constructed "several buildings to house and display his art collection near his home in Merion," a Philadelphia suburb. "Neither the press or art critics

welcomed" Barnes's desire to create a foundation to educate the public to his views and opinions on the meaning of his painting collection (Dalton, 2002, p. 152). "Barnes only exacerbated the ire of his critics by personally expressing his contempt for their opinions" (p. 153). Barnes's intention to create a museum and institute were extensions of his rather "bizarre (even if also rather wonderful)" philosophical views and his personal eccentricities (Ryan, 1995, p. 31).

Barnes was aware of how deeply he had alienated the art establishment, particularly of New York as well as Philadelphia. He viewed the inclusion of Dewey in this enterprise as creating an educational legitimacy to his collection and his intention to create more than just a museum to house his collection. Barnes intention was to establish an institute for furthering his educational goals and spreading his interpretation of "plasticity" in the historic development of painting. The inclusion of Dewey in the Barnes Foundation will become significant in developing Dewey's views on the place of art in human experience.

Three aspects of Barnes and Dewey's relationship will be crucial to Dewey's development of the aesthetic philosophy that became *A as E*. It is hard to imagine a philosophical figure or prominent writer about art ever owing so much to a single source for his or her education, opinion, understanding, and material source, as John Dewey owed to Albert Barnes. After the publication of *A as E*, "privately Dewey acknowledged his debt to Barnes for allowing him to pick his brain and plagiarize his ideas" (Greenfeld, 1987, p. 64).

Barnes had developed a view of art, of himself and of his relationship to spreading his aesthetic philosophy on "plasticity" in art. He believed "that he had created a bible for the Foundation and for the world" (Schack, 1963, p. 159) with his 1925 treatise, *The Art in Painting*. Barnes dedicated the book: "To John Dewey Whose Conceptions of Experience, of Method, of Education, Inspired the Work of Which this Book is a Part" (Barnes, 1925a, p. 90).

In *The Devil and Dr. Barnes* Howard Greenfeld described Barnes as a "cantankerous tyrant" (1987, p. 262), who was driven by a "paranoid fear of being used" (Greenfeld, p. 266). Mary Dearborn's *Love in the Promised Land: The Story of Anzia Yezierska and John Dewey* declares Barnes to be "decidedly eccentric" (Dearborn, 1988, p. 97) with a "vitriolic, ribald, [and] obnoxious . . ." personality (p. 98). Dearborn argues that well beyond eccentricity, "too many commentators looked the other way when" they encountered "Barnes' anti-Semitism" that is a documented sentiment in his letters (Dearborn, pp. 132-133). A writer for the *Province Journal* characterized Barnes as having a reputation as "a firebrand of the most dangerous sort" (Greenfeld, 1987, p. 263). Although his irascibility was "well publicized" (p. 261), Dewey found him endearing (Ryan, 1995, p. 270). Barnes's and Dewey's approaches to life might be emblematically illustrated by their habitual contrast in appearance. Barnes's "favorite garb was a pair of bright-red Breton fisherman's pants, and a blue-and-red plaid shirt" (Dearborn, 1988, p. 98). Dewey, by contrast, and by all accounts and published photographs, nearly always wore a suits and tie.

However, commentators describe him to have a rumpled appearance as if he had slept in his clothes.

Another witness to Barnes's temperament was Thomas Munro who, with his wife, traveled with Barnes and his wife and the Deweys, on at least one of their three European excursions. Munro thought Barnes was "indefatigable, tireless mentally and physically, and always ready to defend his ideas" (Dalton, 2002, p. 154). Famous for his "bad temper" (Ryan, 1995, p. 198), Barnes "was a true pedagogue" who could be "bitterly sarcastic" "in the guise of humor" (Martin, 2002, p. 401). Brand Blanshard and his twin brother, Paul, were also students in Dewey's 1917 seminar. Brand said that Barnes was "a rough and ready type . . . a man with a violent temper and . . . very strong prejudices" (Martin, p. 279).

Dewey's response to Barnes was entirely different, he found Barnes to be an "affable companion" (Dalton, 2002, p. 114). Although others found Barnes "exceedingly difficult to get along with, Dewey found him friendly and cooperative, almost unmatched for sheer brain power" (Dykhuizen, 1973, p. 221), and "more entertaining than disagreeable" (Ryan, 1995, p. 207). Munro believed that one reason for the "indelible bond of friendship" between Barnes and Dewey was that "each felt that their respective views on education and art had been badly misinterpreted by professionals in the field" (Dalton, 2002, p. 154).

Reciprocating Barnes's 1925 gesture to him, Dewey dedicated *Art as Experience*: "To Albert C. Barnes in Gratitude." In his Preface Dewey expressed his

"greatest indebtedness is to Barnes" and that, before the publication of *A as E*, he had gone over each chapter with Barnes. Dewey said that his conversations with Barnes had "been the chief factor in shaping my own thinking about the philosophy of esthetics" (*AE,* 1934, p. *viii*).

Sidney Hook, head of the Philosophy Department at New York University, (NYU) (Schack, 1963, p. 190) remembered how Dewey regularly was required to apologize for Barnes's behavior: "Every time Barnes got into a scrape as a result of browbeating, insulting, or cheating someone, he dragged Dewey into it" (Dearborn, 1988, p. 99). Hook believed that, "Barnes often used Dewey as a front" (Schack, p. 242) and "was exploiting Dewey and Dewey didn't seem to care" (p. 241). One director of the Barnes Foundation, Fiske Kimball, who earlier had chaired the fine arts department at NYU, observed that Dewey was prone not to check both sides of a story, "but to merely echo Barnes" (p. 255). Hook described Barnes "as the only serious failing that Dewey ever exhibited" (Ryan, 1995, p. 207). "They were almost absurdly mismatched" (Dearborn, 1988, p. 98). Hook reports Dewey explaining that Barnes's obnoxiousness was due to "an inferiority complex" (p. 99).

Barnes was not the only person in that evening class in the fall of 1917 that would have an influence in Dewey's life. Anzia Yezierka was also in the class. She would challenge and inspire Dewey. Her presence in his life is significant to the development of *A as E*, as Yezierka would stir Dewey emotionally to experience art first hand as a writer of poetry.

*Anzia Yezierska: "Barnes the Abettor"*

A remarkable young Polish woman, Anzia Yezierska, also attended Dewey's seminar in fall 1917, and briefly exerted a significant influence in Dewey's life. Barnes undoubtedly enhanced her access to Dewey. Yezierska also went by her American name, Hattie Mayer (p. 36), but she was using her married name, Mrs. Arnold Levitas, when she met Dewey (Martin, 2002, p. 281). As a writer of short stories, novels, and screen plays she would publish under her birth name, Anzia Yezerierska. She was "a new woman" from "the heady intellectual atmosphere of bohemian Greenwich Village" (Dearborn, 1988, p. 5). Her daughter "remembered her as a "dazzling, stunning volcano of a person . . . romantic, impatient, childlike, excitable and exciting" (Martin, p. 290).

In fall 1917 when Yezierska met Dewey, Alice, his wife of 31 years, (Ryan, 1995, p. 80), was in San Francisco. The five surviving Dewey children were grown. Dewey was 58. Anzia, 37, was separated from her husband and child. She came to Dewey's office requesting his help in securing a teaching position. With unruly red hair she was "physically striking and emotionally passionate" (Dearborn, 1988, p. 4). Yezierska was set on a literary career and Dewey's "affections were set afire" (Martin, 2002, p. 287). Whatever the reality, for the rest of her literary life, her fiction reworks this meeting of a Polish Jewish immigrant and an older established American intellectual and their falling in love.

Although Dewey destroyed their correspondence (Ryan, 1995, p. 188), poems he had written to her survived tucked into the cubbyholes of his desk or were retrieved by an office secretary, Milton Halsey Thomas, from Dewey's wastepaper basket. The poems were collected and preserved in Columbia's University's archives (Dearborn, 1988, p. 2). These testaments to his affections for her were published posthumously, 18 years after his death in Jo Ann Boydston's *The Poems of John Dewey*. When Boydson compared Dewey's poetry with that of Yezierska's lead characters in her screenplays and stories, they matched. Yezierska had appropriated Dewey's poetry to her, although only the two of them (and likely Barnes) knew that. Her 1921 romantic screenplay is surely based on her meeting Dewey. Samuel Goldwyn made it into the silent motion picture *Hungry Hearts* (p. 142). Yezierska plagiarized passages from his prose, as well, without acknowledging it. In her story *To The Stars* she extracts quotations "verbatim from John Dewey's 1916 address" to the National Education Association (p. 87). Her short stories *Two Weeks* (p. 118) and *All I Could Never Be* (p. 16) both directly quoted Dewey's poetry although that would not be clear until 1972. These poems of Dewey's and some of Yezierska's prose "are the sole surviving records of their relationship" (Boydston, 1977, p. xxiii).

One Dewey biographer refers to the relationship as an "imaginative fantasy" on Dewey's part, (Martin, 2002, p. 291) although another says, "for a time," they were "passionately in love" (Dearborn, 1988, p. 3). Martin believes that the affair was "a literary, not a sexual, episode" (Martin, p. 290). Ryan asserts, "Save for his brief and unconsummated affair with Polish-American novelist Anzia Yezierska, he was an

undeviatingly faithful husband" (1995, p. 38). Dewey was devoted to Alice. Martin says "his own personal morals made anything but a literary expression of sexual love unthinkable outside marriage" (Martin, p. 291).

Dewey bought Anzia her first typewriter and once "emptied his pockets and gave her all the money he had with him so she could do [her] 'real work' [of writing] before she earned her first paycheck from Barnes" (Meyers, 2004, p. 48). Dewey's brief relationship with Yezierska reveals two key factors that influenced his aesthetic thought. First it reveals his personal and emotional commitment to an art form, writing poetry. Secondly, it illustrates the enduring influence Barnes established in Dewey's life. "The affair was brief: their relationship, tender and, although probably physically unconsummated, deeply felt. Albert Barnes abetted it" (p. 43).

*Barnes Influence: Financial Considerations*

The second aspect of Barnes' influence was in Dewey's well-documented financial life. Alan Ryan in *John Dewey and the High Tide of American Liberalism* describes Barnes's financial benefits to Dewey as "a good deal of money over the years" (1995, p. 270). When Dewey met Barnes, "Dewey was concerned about money. He had always been concerned about money, for the Deweys had always been close to being poor" (Martin, 2002, p. 304). Dewey's documented financial benefits from Barnes are numerous.

Barnes's first financial involvement with Dewey began very shortly after they met. In the seminar Barnes offered to "fund the class to conduct an inquiry" (Dalton,

2002, p. 114) into the "assimilation and Americanization of recent immigrants" (Martin, p. 279). Barnes "enthusiasm (and a financial stipend) established" the Polish Project in Philadelphia's neighborhood called Little Poland (p. 280). Barnes "bankrolled" the study (Dearborn, 1988, p. 103) to the extent that "when they could not get a house to rent as a base, he simply bought one with six bedrooms to serve as offices" (Martin, 2002, p. 281). At Dewey's suggestion Barnes hired Anzia Yezierska as a "translator" (Ryan, 1995 p. 173). Barnes hired her "in advance of the others, , . . she lived at the offices" and "was paid $100.00 a month" (Martin, p. 83). "She was not only Dewey's helper in this investigation but his inamorata for some ten months of 1918" (Ryan, p. 188). Barnes reported to Dewey, "the ferret and the bee have nothing on Mrs. Levitas" (Martin, p. 284). "Barnes had certain knowledge of Dewey's relationship with Anzia Yezierska" (p. 99). He wrote Dewey that Yezierska "like the true artist she is . . . spends considerable time in phantasies [sic], some of which she is putting into stories and a novel, and some into my private ear . . . " (Martin, 2002, p. 290). Barnes wrote Alice Dewey a somewhat provocative note expressing the desire that Yezierska work for them "and that I hope to see the woman . . . in his [Dewey's] office" (p. 283). Dewey writing Alice about difficulties between the project staff and Barnes told her he believed, "Mr. B. now understands where the line is drawn between the work and personalities, and that he will be more subdued" (p. 285). Barnes, well aware of Dewey and Yezierska's attraction, created a situation so that every time Dewey went to the office, he in essence, was going to Anzia's home. Whatever Barnes's intention may have been at the start of the Polish Project,

his financial infusion gave Dewey and Yezeriska more legitimate opportunities to meet, and Barnes's value as a confident and financial provider increased. When "the affair was over, Dewey asked Barnes to consider paying Yezierska's salary for a year so the leader of the liberal Polish faction could take her on as an assistant, but she spurned the philosopher's offer of help" (Meyers, 2004, p. 51).

Another way in which Dewey benefited financially from their association was through Barnes's support of Dewey's writing. "Barnes admired Dewey's work so much that he distributed copies of Dewey's *Democracy and Education* to all the workers" in his factory and "gave them time off to read it" (Martin, 2002, p. 279). Barnes's "workforce was mixed-sex and racially integrated," but since he never had "more than twenty employees in the company at any one time" (Anderson, 2003, p. 23), this gesture did not translate into a great surge in books sales. Still Barnes's keen ideological support would have literally impressed Dewey. These direct book sales would have benefited Dewey only minimally but might have encouraged his publisher when considering future editions and publications. As a further endorsement of his new friend's ideas, Barnes added Dewey's *How We Think* to the required reading list of his employees (p. 24). Early on, "Barnes himself published a pamphlet by Dewey, (1918) *Conditions Among Poles in the United States,*" which was the result of their study in Little Poland, Philadelphia (Martin, 2002, p. 284).

In 1919 Barnes offered "Dewey a loan of $2,000 to help meet the expenses of living abroad" during his upcoming trip to Japan (Meyers, 2004, p. 5). Dewey "declined for Mrs. Dewey and himself, but requested that Barnes make up to half the

amount available to their daughter, Evelyn, should she need it while he was gone. Barnes was glad to oblige his friend" (p. 52). I have found no other mentioning of this loan, but Ryan reports that "daughters Lucy and Evelyn" joined their parents on the Asian tour (Ryan, 1995, p. 206). John and Alice sailed from San Francisco on January 22, and arrived in Japan on February 9, 1919 (Dykhuizen, 1973, p. 187); daughter, Lucy arrived several months later in July (p. 197). Dykhuizen reproduced a photograph of Evelyn with her parents and sister at Pei-ta-ho Station on August 11, 1920 (Dykhuizen, photo section). Evelyn Dewey came to Japan sometime after November 1919 and returned to the United States at the end of summer 1920 (Martin, 2002, p. 320). John, Alice, and Lucy extended his lecture tour for another year during which he traveled on to China (Dykhuizen, photo section).

In 1922 Barnes established the Barnes Foundation (Ryan, 1995, p. 207), endowing it with ten million dollars to house his collection and promote his educational ideology (Dykhuizen, 1973, p. 222). Once again Dewey benefited from Barnes's financial prowess when "Dewey was appointed to the staff of the foundation as educational adviser and consultant." At the Foundation's formal dedication on March 19, 1925 (Schack, 1963, p. 161), Dewey was asked to be "one of the main speakers" (Dykhuizen, p. 222), Barnes surely was another of the speakers. In Dewey's speech he "expressed his conviction" that Barnes and the Foundation were taking "significant steps" for "art in education" and spearheading "forward-moving throughout the whole field of education" (Schack, p. 162). Dewey was named to the board and made the foundation's director of education. "The appointment of the most

influential figure in American education to this position constituted a tremendous coup for Barnes: it was a valuable endorsement of his program" (Greenfeld, 1987, p. 90). (I do not know whether Dewey was paid for speeches and lectures or if the board position was paid or not, but the educational directorship would have been a staff position regardless of whether the duties were actual or ceremonial.)

Barnes broadened Dewey's direct experience with art by taking him to Europe. In 1925 and 1926 Barnes took Dewey on three European trips to see art; on at least one of these trips Mrs. Dewey, as well as Thomas Munro and his wife, accompanied them. On these trips "Barnes paid Dewey's expenses to accompany him to European churches and museums" (Martin, 2002, p. 402), "as Barnes often picked up the tab when Dewey traveled with him" (Meyers, 2004, p. 211). In *Art and Argyrol* Shack (1963) reports that on the 1926 trip to Europe, Barnes took Dewey touring museums and churches in Madrid, Vienna and Paris. Dewey was 67 years old when he took this trip, just five years before his Harvard lecture series that would be collected as *A as E* (Schack, 1963, p. 191).

Barnes's embrace of Dewey did not spare others, even Dewey's friends, of Barnes's dogmatic insistence or his vindictive acts. Dewey introduced Bertrand Russell to Barnes, and at Dewey's suggestion Barnes hired Russell to give a lecture once a week, October through May, for $8,000 a year with a five-year contract. Even though Dewey did not benefit directly financially, it was at Dewey instigation that Barnes hired Russell as an additional lecturer. Barnes "completely supported him [Russell] for two years" before abruptly dismissing him for breach of contract for

giving lectures outside the Foundation. Russell had privately said "that the Barnes Foundation was set up expressly to keep the public from seeing the collection" (Schack, 1963, p. 343). Russell sued Barnes for breach of contract and won. Barnes, against all legal advice, appealed the decision and lost again. The settlement awarded Russell another $16,000 (Martin, 2002, pp. 448-449) or $20,000 (Anderson, 2003, p. 40; Schack, 1963, p. 349).

The Barnes Foundation published some of Dewey's essays and books, including reprinting essays from the *Barnes Foundation Journal* 1925-1926 in the 1947 book *Art and Education,* which listed Dewey as lead author before four co-authors. One might likely assume that publications of books came with possible advances and royalties.

"Barnes was as interested as ever in Dewey's well-being, and when he heard in July 1939 that with Dewey's eightieth birthday, his Columbia pension would be cut off, Barnes saw to it that Dewy would receive $5,000 annually during and for the period of his natural life" (Martin, 2002, p. 438). Reconstructing this arrangement, Thomas C. Dalton, in *Becoming John Dewey,* believes the date of the pension as nine years earlier; "Barnes later expressed his gratitude for Dewey's support when the Foundation's policies came under attack by making an annual gift of $5,000 upon Dewey's retirement from Columbia in 1930" (Dalton, 2002, p. 153). Perhaps, Alan

Ryan clarifies the date confusion in *John Dewey and the High Tide of American Liberalism*, pointing out that Dewey retired from Columbia in 1930 and was appointed "Emeritus Professor in Residence." With this status he could continue to draw his full salary. But by 1939 at the end of the Great Depression "Columbia found itself so strapped" for finances that the university determined it could no longer honor the arrangement. Ryan states that Barnes "had long been minded to pay Dewey a retainer of five thousand dollars a year for life in recognition of his value to the Barnes Foundation and to Barnes's own educational efforts" (Ryan, 1995, p. 243). In *The Education of John Dewey,* Jay Martin states that Barnes suggested a travel stipend early in their friendship. "Dewey's plan for a series of the lecture in Japan had formed early as 1917" (Martin, 2002, p. 303). As described above, the Deweys traveled for two years to Japan and China, 1919 -1921 (Dykhuizen, 1973, p. 186). "Barnes recognized Dewey's plight and proposed paying Dewey a monthly stipend for him 'to make a report on Japan as a factor in the future international situation'" (Martin, p. 304), but no other source mentions this early offer of a stipend. However, Barnes would in the future invite Dewey to travel with him as his guest.

*Barnes and Dewey: Travel and Access Benefits*

The intellectual experiences that Barnes facilitated for Dewey were priceless gifts, especially the European trips which served Dewey as his formal education in the history of painting. During these trips, he was, in essence, Barnes's pupil as his benefactor guided him through the museums as if Dewey were a schoolboy (Schack, 1963, p. 191). For Dewey, "Barnes was an appealing unintimidating guide" (Dearborn, 1988, p. 99). "Munro recalled that Dewey listened intently to Barnes's commentary on these trips but had little to say" (Dalton, 2002, p. 154). "Barnes introduced him to a whole new area of knowledge" (Martin, 2002, p. 402).

Dewey's art education had begun in November 1917 when Barnes invited Dewey to visit Merion. Dewey traveled there for the first time in January 1918 and Barnes gave him the tour of his collection. Later Dewey wrote to him that the experience had been extraordinary: "I have been conscious of living in a medium of color ever since Friday – almost swimming in it. I can but feel that it is a mark of the quality of your paintings that there has been no nervous exasperation or fatigue accompanying this sensation" (Meyers, 2004, p. 44).

Barnes recognized that Dewey's response charged him with "a mission: the education in art of America's philosopher" (Meyers, 2004, p. 45). Barnes invited Dewey to return so they could "look at the paintings in the light of . . . Santayana's *Reason in Art*" (p. 45). Barnes extended a special invitation to Dewey to bring his daughter, Evelyn, to hear a concert that he would arrange. These visits became the standing invitation to join him for weekends in Merion. He wrote to Dewey, "I devote every Saturday and Sunday to the fairy world as I get it from pictures and music" (p. 45). Barnes began taking Dewey on tours of artists' studios and introducing him "to his friends," painters William Glackens, Maurice Prendergast, and John Sloan as well as to the Durand-Ruel gallery in New York (p. 45). Throughout Dewey's two-and-a-half-year tour of Japan and China, Barnes wrote him in detail of his collecting ventures and his views on art.

*Co-Curator within Barnes's Collection: Influence of the Collection on* A as E

Barnes shared the astounding gift of Matisse with Dewey, not merely his art but the painter himself. Barnes had Dewey meet Matisse at the pier in New York in December 1930 (Greenfeld, 1987, p. 263), and Dewey escorted Matisse back to Merion to paint *The Dance* mural on a main wall of the Foundation. Barnes paid Matisse a total of $30,000 in three installments for the commission (Anderson, 2003, p. 108). To put that figure in perspective, Barnes told Dewey that over a two month

period in 1921, he had spent $30,000 buying from Leo Stein what Stein described as "beside the Renoirs, [number not recorded though described as small paintings with one very lovely nude that Stein cracked by foolish handling (by his own account)] a Delacroix, Cezanne water colors [no number given], a Daumier, a Cezanne painting, and a bronze of Matisse" (Meyers, 2004, p. 59). In 1920 Barnes had purchased Raphael's *Mother and Child* for $31,500 (p. 57). Barnes who could make a haul for $30,000, clearly valued the promise of a site-specific work by Matisse.

In *Becoming John Dewey,* Dalton observes that the educator could "hardly find a harsh word about any artist." Yet, Dewey's assessment of John Singer Sargent does ring harsh. "Sargent is not a great painter" (*AE,* 1934, p. 47). Barnes had condemned Sargent as a "portrait-manufacturer" (Barnes, 1925a, p. 372) "of no artistic importance," though he begrudged him a "virtuoso" (p. 357). This characterization of Sargent, as with many of Dewey's views of art and art movements, reflects Barnes's evaluations as their source. Dewey's description of "the weakness" of Sir Joshua Reynolds's paintings (*AE,* p. 285) doubtless reflects Barnes's assessment of Reynolds's talent as a "virtuosity of the cheapest kind without any admixture of art" (Barnes, 1925a, p. 296), relegated to "personal flattery or surface imitation" (p. 310) that had "degenerated into the stock trait of Reynolds" (p. 187).

Dewey's exclusion of Picasso might be viewed as extremely harsh. Perhaps Dewey does not mention Picasso out of loyalty to Matisse, or, more likely, the omission of Picasso from *A as E* could have resulted from Dewey's acceptance of

Barnes's view that Picasso's form was "weaker than that of the greatest artists" (Barnes, 1925a, p. 398). The *Art of Painting* does not mention surrealism, Dali, Magritte, Duchamp, Kandinsky, Rodin, Seurat, or the Russian Avant-garde; it is difficult to accept as merely a coincidence that Dewey does not include them either. Arguably, Dewey's exclusion of them is a direct result of Barnes's tutelage and Dewey's dependence on his benefactor as the source of his own assessment. Like Barnes, British critic Robert Fry strongly influenced Dewey with his "insistence on the formal properties of art" which is inconsistent with Dewey's own "emphasis on the artistic role of the creator" (Ryan, 1995, p. 260). "It then becomes simple for Dewey to claim that what the artist puts into a work of art and what the spectator therefore gets out of it is a particular realization of the artist's experience, in which the spectator can then participate" (p. 258). "Dewey's obsession with communication" is at the heart of artistic expression and creation (p. 260). Dewey's personal contact with artists, particularly Matisse, gave Dewey insight into the processes of experience and creation.

Dewey wrote a friend that he had "the pleasure of considerable contact with the French painter, Matisse, first in Paris and then the last ten days in New York" (Dalton, 2002, p. 158). Matisse wrote Dewey, that he, like Dewey, "felt in perfect harmony with everyone" (p. 159). This experience was most surely in marked contrast to his experience with Barnes who had made him a "nervous wreck" and

driven him to suffer a “mild heart attack” while working on the Barnes’s mural (p. 156). Dewey gained a rare insight into the processes of an artist when Matisse shared his newly explored technique of using cut-outs with him. However, Matisse hid his new methodology from Barnes and, tellingly, insisted Dewey do the same (p. 156). Nevertheless, Barnes had given Dewey the opportunity to be involved intimately in Matisse’s thoughts and artistic processes (Greenfeld, 1987, p. 3). “Matisse’s work vividly illustrated the unbreakable phenomenal bond between mind and experience” (Dalton, 2002, p. 165). Matisse even sketched studies for a lithograph of Dewey about which Dewey noted: “If anyone ever writes the actual psychology of the artist’s processes in creation, it will be through access to waste paper baskets, and discarded sketches” (p. 158). This observation of Dewey’s is ironic since much of Dewey’s own poetry to Anzia Yezierska was salvaged from his own waste paper basket, and posthumously published (Dearborn, 1988, p. 2).

Dewey’s access to the Barnes collection approached that of a co-curator. Barnes was amassing the finest American collection of post-impressionist painting, and Dewey was at the center of the enterprise. Mainly, though, “Barnes showed Dewy an approach to artistic productions that stirred his philosophic interest”

(Martin, 2002, p. 402). Barnes "didn't quite 'collect' Dewey the way he did a Renoir, but he gave Dewey his full support and even affection" (p. 279).

*Barnes, African, and African-American Art: Their Influence on Dewey*

Barnes felt a definite affinity for American Black culture dating back to childhood, when his mother had taken him to a spiritual revival meeting and Barnes had a religious experience that he described as "I was switched suddenly from my everyday world to the realm of mysticism . . . . and the ineffable joy of the immediate moment" (Schack, 1963, p. 22). This experience of Barnes's created a recognition and support of African and African-American culture (Ryan, 1995, pp. 254-255) that profoundly influenced Dewey's ideas about art. Barnes claimed to have "the finest collection of African sculpture in existence" (Meyers, 2004, p. 70). "Barnes emotional response to the rhythm and melody of black life was a key factor in his creation of the foundation" (p. 83).

On March 19, 1925, at the Barnes Foundation's opening, Dewey spoke about the African art collection that reflected the aesthetic activities of "individuals whose names are not known, probably have not been known for centuries." Dewey praised the "people of African culture" for the "large part" they played in the "activity that

has culminated" in this "enterprise" (p. 84). Dewey's dedication speech he assessed the importance of the collection of African art being available for the American public:

> I know of no more significant, symbolic contribution than that which the work of members of this institution have made to the solution of what sometimes seems to be not merely a perplexing but a hopeless problem –that of race relations. The demonstration that two races may work together successfully and cooperatively, that the work has the capacity to draw out from our negro friends something of that artistic interest and taste in making the contribution which their own native temperament so well fits them to make, is something to be dwelt upon in a celebration like this. We may well rejoice at every demonstration of the artistic capacity of any race which has been in any way repressed or looked upon as inferior. It is the demonstration of this capacity for doing beautiful and significant work which gives the best proof of the fundamental quality, and equality, of all people (Meyers, 2004, p. 84).

The shared humanity of all people throughout time is one of the founding principles of art education. That Dewey spoke so eloquently of our indebtedness and link to our ancestry is a worthy commemoration and was a view that he and Barnes held in common. "Barnes not only supported African-American demands for equal

opportunity, he admired and valued the intellectual and artistic accomplishments of black men and women" (Meyers, 2004, p. 131). In 1926, the Barnes Foundation published *Primitive Negro Sculpture,* a 134 page book with photographs of 41 works from Barnes's collection (p. 132). The May 1926 issue of Barnes Foundation's *Journal* was devoted to the subject of the collection's African sculpture (Greenfeld, 1987, p. 139). In his monograph, *The Art in Painting* (1925) Barnes wrote that Picasso became intrigued by African sculpture in 1907 when he saw a Paris exhibition of African art. Barnes argued that Picasso's "paintings of that period are really a pictorial reproduction of the plastic values of that sculpture" (Barnes, 1925a, p. 390). Meyers notes that Picasso, upon seeing the African masks in the Ethnographical Museum in Paris made more studies for his painting the *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon* (Meyers, 2004, p. 133).

In *A as E* Dewey includes nine photographs of art works, five of the works are from the Barnes collection and two of those five works are of African art. Dewey argues that "the fetishes of the negro sculptor" were more useful to "his tribal group" than spear or clothes, "but now are fine art, serving in the twentieth century to inspire renovations in arts that had grown conventional" (*AE,* 1934, p. 26). This first mention

of African art in *A as E* again calls to mind Picasso's 1907 *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon.* A decade before *A as E* was published, Barnes had written Dewey that "the best Picasso I ever saw was lying on an inclined roof opposite my office. The reason it is not in our gallery, is that it was made of snow and the sun ate it" (Meyers, 2004, p. 188). Despite that accolade, Barnes did not regard Picasso as highly as the "men of first rank" (Barnes, 1925a, p. 393), a category Barnes reserved for Cezanne, Renoir and Matisse. Barnes concluded that a "sense of a deeply purposeful effort toward a style adequate to carry a profoundly personal and original vision is absent in Picasso," although he acknowledged the breadth of Picasso's influence. Barnes assessed that "Most recent painting in America is based chiefly upon the work of Cezanne, Matisse and Picasso" (p. 363). Cezanne, Renoir and Matisse are the principal artists Dewey examines in *A as E;* Picasso is never mentioned. In *The Art in Painting*, Barnes notes that African art "is in the fullest sense sculptural" and is "a new source of inspiration" for painting (p. 375).

Dewey praises the traditions of "people remote in time and foreign in culture" (*AE,* 1934, p. 330) and believes that no single tradition or exclusive initiation is definitive in the art experience (p. 311). All cultures have "veridical significance" (p.

330). Dewey concludes: “The undeniable fact of the collective cultural origin and import of works illustrates . . . that art is a strain in experience rather than an entity in itself” (p. 330). Here Dewey, in tracing us back to our most distant ancestors, is drawing the historical distinction of the place of art in our collective experience.

Art is not just the culmination of marks in drawings and paintings; art is created in an endeavor to express human feelings through modifying nature, as the 30,000 year old marks, gauges, strokes and splatters on the cave walls in southern Europe such as the cave paintings at Lascaux offer inspiring evidence. Recognizing that the art experience of others is an extension of ourselves and of all other humans, past and present, is one of the postulates of art education and of post-modern theory. Dewey says it eloquently: “To some degree we become artists ourselves as we undertake this integration, and by bringing it to pass, our own experience is reoriented. Barriers are dissolved, limiting prejudices melt away, when we enter into the spirit of Negro or Polynesian art. This insensible melting is far more efficacious than the change effected by reasoning, because it enters directly into attitude” (*AE,* 1934, p. 334). The origins of Dewey’s aesthetic development that is reflected in *A as*

*E* can be traced to his earlier writings with his articles for the Barnes Journal being some of the most revealing on this development.

### *Dewey's Publications in the* Barnes Foundation Journal

The next three essays are from the *Journal of Barnes Foundation* that was discontinued after five issues (Schack, 1963, p. 161), eventually restarted and then renamed*, Barnes Foundation: Journal of the Art Department*. Dewey's essay "Experience, Nature and Art" appeared in the April 1925 issue, "Individuality and Experience" was published in the January 1926 issue and "Affective Thought in Logic and Painting" was in the April edition of the same year. These essays are Dewey's first published works written after meeting Barnes that he dedicated solely to art, aesthetics and education. Predictably, Dewey reflects the influence of Barnes and his views on art, specifically his notions on painting. But in these essays Dewey begins to articulate essential themes that he delivers in his 1931 lectures collected in *Art as Experience* in 1934.

#### *Dewey's Article: "Experience, Nature and Art"*

For the first time Dewey uses *experience* and *art* in a title together. The same year, 1925, Dewey published his book *Experience and Nature*. In *John Dewey on Education: Selected Writings*, "Experience, Nature and Art" is categorized as an essay. However, in the *Journal of the Barnes Foundation* it is noted as an "Abstract from Professor Dewey's new book *Experience and Nature*." The content in both publications is identical although neither is actually an essay or an "abstract of the

book." Rather, it is more accurately a collection of excerpts from chapter IX of *Experience and Nature* with some additional commentary that is presumably Dewey's, although it reads much more like the sentiments and tone of Barnes. In the chapter and essay or abstract Dewey begins exploring the themes of art's place with the individual and the community, themes that are central to *A as E.*

Dewey begins the abstract or essay by identifying contemporary art theories and pointing out the main inconsistencies in their interpretations. Dewey views one group of inconsistencies arising from the differences between the individual's experience of actual art and the collective interpretations that represent the "survival of opinions and assumptions inherited from the past" (*SW*, Dewey, 1974, p. 157). Dewey points out the inherent inconsistency in attempting to view art both as a subject and as a practice. Exploring the historic distinctions between useful arts and fine arts, Dewey sees parallels that art shares with science. Art and science are operations that are both revelatory and contemplative for Dewey. The relationship of subject and practice, of useful arts and fine arts, and of art and science are three key themes Dewey will develop in *A as E.*

While exploring the origins and links between the practical art of the artisan and the fine art of the artist, Dewey believes that the past "erred in neglecting the connection of knowledge with experiment, and so in isolating knowledge from practice" (*SW*, Dewey, 1974, p. 158). He distinguishes the practice of art from aesthetic appreciation, which he sees as "enhanced or heightened perceptions" (p.

159). The fundamental difference in approach is that the artist is active, while the connoisseur is passive (p. 158).

In his attempt to woo his readers to a more inclusive definition of art, Dewey employed a rather convoluted approach. Dewey begins defining his categories of art with a puzzling presentation that requires a twist in the reader's perspective: "The degradation of labor is paralleled by a degradation of art."

Dewey identifies three categories of art that he refers to as "captions" (*SW*, Dewey, 1974, p. 159). The captions or categories result from different degrees of the degradation of art and labor. Each caption is offered in a negative extreme as Dewey coaxes the reader to consider a more liberal understanding of contemporary art. His intention is to guide the reader to recognize that narrow definitions create inconsistencies that hamper our acceptance of new modes of expression.

The first category of art is a "mere indulgence in emotional outpouring" that is unintelligible and "largely futile" due to its "willfully eccentric character." The novelty of such works Dewey says requires the aid of violence to be acceptable, partly "because the channels of expression currently accepted are rigidly laid down" (*SW*, Dewey, 1974, p. 159). That last phrase is the twist; the artwork is unacceptable because the viewers' expectations are so rigidly confined.

The second category Dewey identifies consists of work the artist makes by "seemingly bizarre and over-individualistic" experimental "modes of craftsmanship." Dewey then repositions his argument stating that some movement is necessary "due to discontent with existing techniques" and that this discontent is "a condition of

salvation from that mortal arrest and decay called academic art" (*SW*, Dewey, 1974, p. 160). If we are not open to new forms of expression, Dewey says, then art stagnates and will not engage our interest or inspire us to explore feelings and new ideas.

Dewey's third category of artistic production "bulks most largely as fine art" categorized in painting as "pictures in the name of painting" that "celebrates the regular and finished" (*SW*, Dewey, 1974, p. 160). These works of art become "commodities" for "well-to-do persons desirous of maintaining a conventionally approved status" (p. 160). If an individual is not open to either emotion in the subject of the work or exploration in the execution of the work, then the art object is merely a decorative memento of cultural taste or product to project the owners' financial aspirations or status.

After offering these disparaging views in the introduction of each category, he pragmatically concludes that the categories "share qualities and defects" that may be mixed or "occur without mixture" in which "process and product" are "characteristically excellent" and "afford continuously renewed delight" (*SW*, Dewey, 1974, p. 160). Dewey believes a useful object is truly art when a "union" of qualities makes it impossible and quite unnecessary to differentiate between useful and fine art (p. 161). When he distinguishes between arts created for status and menial arts that "common people" use, he concludes "the only basic distinction is that between bad art and good art" (p. 162). The distinction between good and bad art is determined by how "things . . . meet the requirements of art" (p. 162). Dewey pronounces that "the 'eternal' quality of great art" lies in its ability to cultivate fulfilling experiences by

"enlarging the horizon of vision." These experiences "are confirmed and deepened by further experiences" (p. 161). Dewey develops this idea as a fundamental theme of *A as E:* When interacting with a work of art, the viewer recreates that work; Dewey envisions the viewer's experience as an act of creation in itself.

As in *S & S* and *C & C,* Dewey draws parallels between art and science, with both engaged in the "active production process" (*SW*, Dewey, 1974, p. 163). "Art" Dewey says is a process of selection "to enhance, prolong and purify the perceptual experience" (p. 163). Of abstraction in art, for Dewey it does not matter if the artist works with "a minimum of analytic recognition" of her or his choices or if she or he selects by "a kind of sympathetic vibration." The selections may be "discriminatively ascertained," but in every case the artist still "utilizes his deliberate awareness" in creating "works of art" (p. 164). This may result in an art that is "more formal and abstract than those to which the public is accustomed" (p. 164). These discriminations that the artist makes in the process conclude with "at worst, these products are "'scientific, . . . as a new kind of pedantry," and at best they assist in bringing "new modes of art and by education of the *organs* [sic] of perception in new modes of consummatory objects, they enlarge and enrich the world of human vision" (p. 164). Dewey is very determined for the viewer to open up to new experiences and consider "things" that fall outside the "accustomed" definitions of "fine" and "academic art" (p. 160).

Dewey never named a particular artist or movement to define, exemplify or to distinguish among his categories of art. Yet Dewey intends these criteria to serve to

open the reader's perceptions of how rigidly art is defined and move beyond these limitations, "ushering in new modes of art and by education of the *organs* of perception . . ." (*SW*, Dewey, 1974, p. 164). Often when Dewey makes a significant pronouncement he tends to use the word "organ" as the perceptive instrument. Although he does not use the word often, when he does he is attempting to bring the full scope and preponderance to a culmination of his meanings.

Given Dewey's verbose, vague and often meandering style, one wonders how his and Barnes' ideal reader, the "common people," would follow the twists of his argument as he presents these categories of art. The categories are formed, presumably to make it easier for the reader to understand. The reader is to navigate through his first category, that might appear as the "mere indulgent . . . expressions of emotion," find their way through his second category which may seem to be created in "bizarre, over-individualistic . . . new modes of expression," and come through his third category where the reader is to consider that what they have defined previously as "fine art" may merely "remind their owner of things pleasant in memory" or "remind others" of the owners social status. Dewey's strategy seems to be to align himself with the projected prejudices he assumes matches that of his readers, in order to encourage the readers to broaden their views on art and create in them a new openness to the unidentified contemporary art he hopes they will have the opportunity to encounter and consider.

*Dewey's Article: "Individuality and Experience"*

In the essay, "Individuality and Experience," Dewey most clearly outlines how an art-based curriculum should proceed. Published in the *Journal of the Barnes Foundation* in January 1926, the essay "Individuality and Experience" considers themes he addressed in *S & S* and *C & C*. These themes focus on applying a positive, child-centered, experiential approach to education.

The essay begins with two observations about picture-making in the classes of Professor Cizek, who was working with young children in Vienna. Dewey's two observed conditions are: (a) It is "impossible to exclude outside influences" and (b) Teachers bear the responsibility to represent "accumulated experience of the past" by joining the extremes of "external imposition and dictation, and 'free-expression'" (*SW*, Dewey, 1974, p. 149). With these conditions as the guiding principles Dewey asks the reader to consider Cizek's work with children in "every branch of education" (p. 149). Dewey believes Cizek's work suggests a change in direction is required, shifting experience toward participation and the "perception of the relations of means and consequences" (p. 150). Dewey says that when the teacher transfers technique, she or he initiates a new classroom tradition by releasing and directing the "powers of the learners" (p. 151). He insists that "there is no inherent opposition between theory and practice; the former enlarges, releases and gives significance to the latter" (p. 153). "The real intellectual shaping of the 'end' or purpose comes during and because of the operations subsequently performed." This is equally true of teacher-directed

projects and "those which 'spontaneously' spring from the pupils" (p. 154). He concludes "Originality and independence of thinking are therefore connected with the intervening process of execution rather than with the source of the initial suggestion" (p. 155).

*Dewey's "Affective Thought in Logic and Painting"*

*The Journal of the Barnes Foundation* published Dewey's third essay, "Affective Thought in Logic and Painting," in April 1926. In this essay, Dewey explores one of his favored themes, the duality between mind and body. He contrasts acts performed for "science's sake" and those performed for "art's sake." By discussing the roles of affective thought, he hopes his analysis will help in the "breaking-down of fixed barriers between them," to remove the "separation of science, art and practical activity from one another" (*SW*, Dewey, 1974, p. 142). These themes will become pivotal to *A as E*: "The material of thought all comes from the past; but its purpose and direction is future" (*SW*, 1974, p. 143). Imagination reshapes "natural conditions exercised by emotion" (p. 144). "Unconscious activities are realities" that shape works of art as our engrained organic memories are liberated through the "expansive power of art" (p. 145).

The last third of the short essay praises Barnes's newly released book, *The Art in Painting* (1925). "Mr. Barnes has shown that plastic form is the *integration of all plastic means*" (*SW*, Dewey, 1974, p. 146). Dewey credits Barnes with analyzing the viewer's organic responses of eye activities and explaining the "union of sensory and

motor actions" (p. 146). He makes some remarkable pronouncements: "Mr. Barnes has also for the first time given us the clue to the historical development of modern painting in terms of paintings themselves" (p. 147). Dewey's tone is as subtle as that of a carnival barker's. "Mr. Barnes is in the first place so thoroughly in accord with the present trend of fundamental biological conceptions, and, secondly, because it makes possible an application of these biological conceptions to the whole field of artistic structures and aesthetic criticism" (p. 148). This makes it "possible to break down the traditional separation between scientific and intellectual systems and those of art, and also to further the application of the principle of integration to the relationship of those elements of culture which are so segregated in our present life — to science, art, in its variety of forms, industry and business, religion, sport and morals" (p. 148). This review clearly reveals how deeply Dewey reveres Barnes and certainly must have helped ease Barnes's suffering that had been inflected by less favorable reviewers. Furthermore, it exemplifies Dewey's many attempts to appease Barnes's insecurities as well as protect him from perceived slights to his reputation, by elevating Barnes to the status of a serious, innovative thinker or genius. Dewey concludes by warmly endorsing the Barnes Foundation's recognition that "paintings when taken out of their specialized niche are the basis of an educational experience . . ." (p. 148).

### *Dewey's* Experience and Nature *(1925*)

In 1925, the same year the "abstract" of "Experience, Nature and Art*"* ran in the *JBF,* Dewey published the book*, Experience and Nature.* In the revised Preface of

the 1929 edition, Dewey asserts that art is the "most complete incorporation of natural forces and operations in experience." Art "represents the culminating event of nature as well as the climax of experience" (*EN*, Dewey, 1958, p. xv). Dewey returns to the relationship between science and art when he states "that scientific inquiry is an art" instrumental to the "pure enjoyment of [the] mind" (p. xvi).

Chapter IX of *Experience and Nature* is the expanded version of "Experience, Nature and Art" from which the *BJF* abstract was drawn. The chapter begins with more detailed and elaborate references to the Greeks and their relationship with art where "experience was considered to be a genuine expression of cosmic forces" (*EN*, Dewey, 1958, p. 354), and "art reflected the contingencies and partialities of nature" (*EN*. p. 355). He makes a significant change adding a further identity to fine art as creative art: "Modern thought also combines exaltation of science with eulogistic appreciation of art, especially of fine or creative art" (*EN*, p. 355). He makes the pronouncement "that science is an art" and that "art is practice" (*EN*, p. 358). He also incorporates the box building example from the *S & S* (*SS,* p. 37 & *EN*, p. 379). However, Dewey drops the phrase "the degradation of labor is paralleled by a degradation of art" (*EN*, Dewey, 1974, p. 159) from his introduction to his categories of art from the "Experience, Nature and Art" *JBF* article. He also alters the first category, dropping the "mere indulgence in emotional outpouring" (p. 159), and just labeling it as "self-expression," that is "sometimes known as 'expression of emotion'" "which is then set up for definition of all fine art" (*EN*, Dewey, 1958, p. 363). Rather than declaring the category as "largely futile," as in the *JBF* essay, Dewey says in

*Experience and Nature* that "all art is a process of making the world a different place in which to live, and involves a phase of protest and of compensatory response" (p. 363). He concludes describing this category with "it is owing to frustration in communication of meaning that the protest becomes arbitrary and the compensatory response willfully eccentric" (p. 363). This is far milder than the essay's requirement of "violence" to overcome the "rigidly laid down" "channels" for the acceptance of "novelty" (Dewey, 1974, p. 159). Much of Dewey's twisting of perspectives in the *Journal* essay are removed or clarified when he rewrites the same material for chapter IX, *Experience and Nature.*

In chapter IX, Dewey defines the second category of art as "experimentations of new modes of craftsmanship" (*EN*, Dewey, 1958, p. 363). He characterizes the third category as "that which in quantity bulks most largely as fine art" (p. 364). Notably, the text of both these categories is reproduced in *Experience and Nature* just as they appeared in the essay version. Otherwise, the substantive ideas and themes in the book chapter are related closely to the *Journal* essay, with most of the essay directly reproduced throughout the chapter. Dewey's expanded commentary has several noteworthy additions. Dewey adds that a work of art "directly liberates subsequent action and makes it more fruitful in a creation of more meaning and more perceptions" (*SW*, Dewey, 1974, p. 371). This is very much in line with Dewey's goal of expanding the conception of how viewers consider art. Dewey says that science "is the intelligent factor *in* art" (*EN*, p. 367). Dewey also articulates his most novel statement: "Art is the sole alternative to luck" and "is the essence of luck" (*SW*, p.

372). In a culture that attributed inspiration to divine intervention, balancing art with luck could have been viewed as heresy.

Dewey identifies the origins of his favorite dualisms as being "the slow emancipation of art from magical rite and cult," and "the emergence of science from superstition" (*EN*, Dewey, 1958, p. 384). In continuing to examine the relationship between science and art he offers his clearest statements of what the processes share. "Knowledge or science, as a work of art, like any other work of art, confers upon things traits and potentialities which did not previously belong the them" (*SW*, Dewey, 1974, p. 381). Art making transforms science and knowledge making them greater than the sum of their parts. "The history of science is . . . the record of a differentiations of arts, not a record of the separation from art" (p. 388). Historically art and science are linked symbiotically. Dewey conceptualizes the recording of the past as: "In short, the history of human experience is a history of the development of arts" (p. 388). Following this concept, the teaching of history should be based on the progression and achievements of the arts as opposed to how history so often is taught with the chronicling of wars, battle strategies and weapons technologies presented as being the most important achievements of human culture.

Dewey concludes the chapter by noting that "experience in the form of art, when reflected upon, . . . solves more problems which have troubled philosophers and resolves more hard and fast dualisms than any other theme of thought" (*SW*, Dewey, 1974, p. 393). Characterizing art as a "theme of thought" to solve philosophical dualisms forms the core of Dewey's ultimate declaration of the place of art in

education. In attempting to synthesize these categories of art into succinct statements Dewey, uncharacteristically brief, summarizes: " The idea is, in short, art and a work of art" (*EN*, Dewey, 1958, p. 371). The fruition of an idea is not necessary; the idea itself is art. "Thinking is pre-eminently an art" (p. 378). The experience of the idea, the sensation, pleasure, and exhilaration of solely the idea itself constitutes art. Dewey's distillation of this idea anchors the philosophical foundation of *A as E*. For the creator or the viewer, experiencing just one idea can be elevated to embody the art experience. "A work of art, it is recreated every time it is esthetically experienced" (*AE,* 1934, p. 108).

*Barnes's* Art and Education *(ed. 1947)*

All three articles are reproduced in a book, *Art and Education* (1947) that, despite its title is disappointing. An expectation drawn from the book's title that Dewey at eight-seven would apply the philosophy of *A as E* to the education of children would be misplaced. This publication of the Barnes Foundation also collects Dewey's foreword to Barnes's book *The Art of Renoir* 1935, but reveals nothing of his later thought. The book also includes chapters from three of Barnes's other books including *The Art in Painting.* Although Foundation members (including Violette de Mazia, the Head of the Museum Studies) contribute the remainder of the entries, the book still is listed with Dewey as the author. Likely, Dewey's name offered legitimacy and sold books. The abstract or essay and not the chapter version of "Experience, Nature and Art" is included with "a degradation of art" and "indulgence

. . . without . . . intelligibility" (Dewey, 1947, p. 25) reissued directly from the 1925 journal version.

*The Influence of Barnes's* The Art in Painting *(1925)*

*on Dewey's* Art as Experience (*1934)*

As noted earlier, Barnes dedicates *The Art in Painting* to Dewey and Dewey dedicates *Art as Experience* to Barnes. These gestures clearly express the esteem they held for each other's views and philosophies as well as their acknowledgement that each had an important role in shaping and determining the other's thoughts. Dewey rated Barnes's book with the great works of science, and Barnes said he based his book on Dewey's philosophy (Schack, 1963, p. 242). The most disparaging comments about their relationship were that Barnes had collected Dewey as he did works of art (Martin, 2002, p. 279) and that Dewey "follows his master slavishly" (Schack, p. 239).

When Dewey sent Barnes a copy of *A as E* with the dedication and Preface praising his patron, Dewey wrote, "I hope it isn't unworthy of all I have learned from you" (Meyers 187). Before Dewey met Barnes, it seems that the only artists Dewey mentioned by name were Raphael and Corot (*CC,* Dewey, 1902, p. 194).

The day after *A as E* was published, Barnes used the book in his lectures at the Foundation and reported that he sold fifty copies of *A as E* to his students (Meyers, 2004, p. 188). His students' feedback led Barnes to suggest that if *A as E* were "simplified and condensed" that "it could be a best seller," that is, if there were a "version that would be more accessible to general readers" (p. 188). Had Dewey

followed through on these early readers' suggestion, then a more accessible *A as E* could have given Dewey's philosophy a greater chance to be integrated into the educational foundation of the contemporary school curriculum. Still Meyers' concluded that *A as E* is "among the most significant and original theoretical texts on art" (p. 187).

Because Barnes sought out reviewers, for both his *A in P* and for Dewey's *A as E,* these commentators may well have been less than candid in order to preserve whatever uneasy relationship they had with the volatile Barnes. Barnes's burning drive to make modern art intellectually and physically accessible to working people was motivated partly by his hatred of the art establishment (Ryan, 1995, p. 31). Understandably Barnes feared how his own book would be received. He doubted himself as a writer and even had contemplated collaborating with a ghostwriter (Schack, 1963, p. 157) as he would with his four following books. He also felt vulnerable and feared retribution for his vindictiveness and his many personal and ethical attacks on the art establishment. To Barnes's surprise, the reviews were mostly favorable and the book garnered some high praise (p. 158). Poet and literary theorist Ezra Pound praised *A in P* as "a rare thing, the right kind of book about painting" (Greenfeld, 1987, p. 110). Alfred Barr, Jr., of the Museum of Modern Art (Schack, p. 182), found it "an important book because it presents a systematic and confident statement of what is central in the 'modern' attitude toward painting," though "ponderous as a textbook" with "historical errors . . . too frequent to catalog" (p. 158).

Leo Stein, an American Art collector living in Paris, had made a great deal of money selling Barnes numerous paintings, and would again when Barnes saved him from financial ruin by buying all of Stein's remaining Renoirs (Meyers, 2004, p. 59). Stein thought Dewey's book, "perfectly honest, reliable twaddle . . . and oh so dull" (p. 185). Nevertheless, not to offend Barnes in his review, he modified his judgment of *A as E* to "sound but not very lively" (p. 185).

Barnes met Leo and his sister, Gertrude Stein (p. 24) in 1912, when Leo sold him his first two paintings by Matisse (Greenfeld, 1987, p. 44). By the end of that year Barnes bought a dozen Renoirs and as many Picassos, largely at Leo Stein's instigation. Leo Stein disapproved of Cubism and influenced Barnes's views of the movement. In *A in P*, Barnes said "the majority of cubistic painters have no more aesthetic significance than the pleasing patterns in an Oriental rug" (Barnes, 1925a, p. 377). Dewey only referred to cubism when he said, "I once saw a lecturer on painting obtain a cheap laugh from his audience by showing a cubistic picture and asking the audience to guess what it was about" (*AE,* p. 112).

Barnes confided to Dewey that Stein was the only individual fully qualified to review his own book and then he felt betrayed by Stein's review in *The New Republic* (Greenfeld, 1987, p. 111). Although Stein's critique was largely favorable, finding *A in P* "something fresh and new and thoroughly worthwhile," in good critical conscience he concluded, "there is in this a serious defect of method." Stein viewed Barnes methodology as "clearly the direction of his own interests," observing that it "would be a great mistake on the part of any student to direct his efforts towards a

similar vision." Not surprisingly, "Barns felt betrayed" (Greenfeld, 1987, p. 111). "Dewey stood in awe of Barnes' connoisseurship even as he recognized the intractable insecurity and pugnaciousness that coexisted with an awesome talent" (Meyers, 2004, p. 186). In Dewey's own review of *A in P* in the *New Republic,* he countered Stein's criticisms to Barnes satisfaction (p. 157).

### *Barnes's Influence on Dewey's* A as E*: A Summary*

Woven through the fabric of *A as E,* Dewey expresses his appreciation for the seventeen years of friendship that he and Barnes shared, and would continue to share until Barnes' death at 79 on July 24, 1951 (Greenfeld, 1987, p. 285). Dewey outlived him by almost a year, dying at 92 on June 1, 1952 (Ryan, 1995, p. 338). *A as E* is primarily Dewey's philosophical treatise encompassing the whole educational experience through aesthetic expression. Alan Ryan rightly believes that "Dewey's target is to reconstruct what the creator does when he creates rather than what the spectator does when he experiences the creation" (p. 255). But Dewey is deeply interested in the viewer's experience in *A as E*. He is particularly interested in the creator as a viewer of their own work; that relationship is particularly insightful in what it reveals of the educational processes involved in "teaching and learning" through an interaction with art (*AE,* 1934, p. 347).

Without Barnes's influence Dewey very probably would not have developed a model using the occupations from *S & S* and *C & C* to apply to modern art as a learning means. Everyone who knew them reports that Dewey did not argue with Barnes who, in turn, is reported to have argued with everyone except Dewey and

Violette de Mazia. Instead of debating Barnes, Dewey responded by composing his lectures with characteristics of an oral argument.

Dewey does not believe in Barnes's "fairy world." Dewey believed only in the world of direct experience. Dewey's first trip to Merion provides the impetus for *A as E*. In his letter to Barnes, Dewey described "swimming" in a consciousness "of living in a medium of color," in "sensation" without "nervous exasperation or fatigue" (Meyers, 2004, p. 44). This was apparently the first time that Dewey encountered these heightened perceptions through paintings, and the visit initiates him to the living presence of art as experience. One has to reach back to Dewey's own account of his "mystic experience" when he was still teaching high school in Oil City (1879 – 1882), when under a night of stars he had the realization "of oneness with the universe." He told his friend Max Eastman, "I've never had any doubts since then, or any beliefs. To me faith means not worrying . . . I claim I've got religion and that I got it that night in Oil City" (Dykhuizen, 1973, p. 22). That was nearly twenty years earlier; it is Dewey's closest recorded response equaling his reaction to the evening with Barnes and his collection (Dearborn, 1988, p. 19).

Painting offered Dewey the perfect symbolic vehicle for learners to experience expression, both as creators and viewers of a self generated expression. Art merges memory with the present moment, and enfolds our anticipation of our projected futures through direct action. This is the heart of *A as E*. It is not a dictatorial application driven to oppress a single individual personality upon another's experience, as Barnes's methodology does if followed to its ultimate conclusion.

Barnes's view taken to the extreme determines that the presentation has a monumental determination on the defining of the individual's experience. *A as E* is a purer guide, ultimately addressing the individual learner and that person's relationship to learning through the act of doing, while receiving impressions and associations that are rightly and ultimately the viewer's own.

What others perceive and surmise about a work of art, considered with one's own responses, culminates in and creates the cultivated fulfillment that sharing and adapting brings. Each interaction influences every moment. Memory and the emergence of subconscious imagery constitute some of the nuances experienced when individuals express themselves as creators and viewers in appreciation of an experience. The ever-ephemeral moments of action and reaction play off each other. Experience couples the "present moment" with remembered associations. In creating experience, whether it is an object or impression, the creation becomes the art experience when the response is recognized as *art*.

Inadvertently this insight was the most significant gift to Dewey by Barnes, who had remained such an open child to his "fairy world" of personal interpretations (Meyers, 2004, p. 45). For Dewey, Barnes was a study of how the learner learns and applies the perspective and philosophy of viewership as they themselves develop it. Barnes was relentless, an avaricious collector of a particular experience, triggered by the exploring and applying of his own idiosyncratic idea of plasticity. He imposed his ideology upon an ever-expanding treasure-trove that became specimens as he applied his method of interpretation to them. Dewey was an ear to the rant. Yes, Dewey was

learning about painting, paintings and plasticity from Barnes, but mainly, Barnes, in his hunger to tell Dewey his every thought, was an ideal field specimen for Dewey to observe and draw meaning from on how the art experience entered the learner and was reformed in their knowledge base. Barnes's petulance reveals him to be the extreme child who never relinquished his wonderland. Barnes's collection was a true predecessor to a Disney-like theme park. The Foundation in Merion was his amusement park at which he could arrange and control —to the greatest extent possible— the viewer's experience. Dewey listened and, from Barnes intense desire to make another see it as he sees it, Dewey creates his universal everyman, his child at the easel of curriculum creation.

Barnes not only invited Dewey into his world, but he brought him in, took him for the full ride: trips to Europe, to artist's studios, the journey through every acquisition, every battle he picked in his argument with the art establishment. Barnes constructed his methodology through these arguments. Dewey seemed by all accounts, to offer no resistance. For Dewey, Barnes opened a window onto how experiences are taken in, and how the prejudices and predilections of the individual affect and determine the meanings of all experience. This sharing was that rarest gift of insight which only friendship could offer.

From these influences and stated ideas, Dewey would design and compose his lectures, tweak them or not, into chapters for *A as E*. Barnes offered a balancing influence that opened Dewey to new realms of awareness.

In the next chapter I will look at selected analyses, and another person of immeasurable influence Dewey met in 1916. These factors should offer insight in determining how best to apply *A as E* to the formation and design of curriculum for children.

# CHAPTER IV:

# OTHER WRITERS' VIEWS ON *ART AS EXPERIENCE*, THE INFLUENCE OF F. MATTHIAS ALEXANDER AND REFLECTIONS ON THE DEWEY SCHOOL AND THE SCHOOLS OF TOMORROW

In this chapter I address an odd grouping of topics regarding Dewey's developing ideas about art and how they can be applied to elementary curriculum. I will evaluate two major assessments of *A as E*, the often dismissed influence on Dewey of F. Matthias Alexander, and what is revealed about Dewey's views on art in education from his other writings on art. These topics, influences and issues are instrumental in shaping our understanding of Dewey and his *Art as Experience.* Two major Dewey scholars, Philip W. Jackson and Thomas M. Alexander are a great source of knowledge and understanding. While neither Jackson's *John Dewey and the Lessons of Art* (1998) or Alexander's *John Dewey's Theory of Art, Experience & Nature: The Horizons of Feeling* (1987) specifically addresses Dewey's philosophy to children's curriculum formation, both offer compelling insights on how *A as E* might be applied productively to this end. Dewey's other major writings after *The Child and the Curriculum* (1902) and before *Art as Experience* (1934) offer insights into his developing views of the place of art in teaching and learning. I will also seek to form an understanding of the influence of F. Matthias Alexander, the third person of consequence that Dewey met at the end of 1916 just before he met Barnes and

Yezierska. Reflections of these seemingly disparate topics, issues and influences should help form an understanding of Dewey's philosophy of art as it relates to children and their own art-making. No primary or secondary source seems to apply *A as E* directly to curriculum formation for kindergarten and elementary school students.

### *Philip W. Jackson's* John Dewey and the Lessons of Art *(1989)*

Jackson's introduction to the Chicago Press's edition of *The School and Society* and *The Child and the Curriculum* (1990) and the *Foreword* to Laurel N. Tanner's *Dewey's Laboratory School Lessons for Today* (1997); both establish the depth of Jackson's insights about Dewey. *John Dewey and the Lessons of Art* never addresses *A as E* to children in the classroom, but Jackson does shed light on the individual's relationship to art.

#### *Applications: Warhol, Cage & Heizer*

Defending the relevance of Dewey's philosophy, Jackson applies *A as E* to individual works of art by referencing several contemporary artists. Jackson's analysis of individual works by three pivotal and very different late twentieth-century, American artists: pop artist Andy Warhol (1928-1987), sculptor and land artist Michael Heizer (1944- ) and experimental composer and philosopher John Cage (1912-1992) are particularly illuminating.

In 1964, Andy Warhol entered into Pop Art at Manhattan's Stable Gallery (Jackson, 1998, pp. 70 -71) with renditions of Brillo soap pads packaging silk-

screened onto wooden boxes that were 44 x 43 x 35.5 cm. (Osterwold, 1999, p. 29). "Brillo Box" pushed the accepted limits of art (Jackson, p. 95) by transforming an ordinary and pedestrian commercial object into a source for a genuine art experience. By presenting the boxes in the gallery setting (p. 102) Warhol forced the viewer to reconsider their own criteria for art. In contemplating the assemblage of "Brillo Box" as something other than a utilitarian object viewers were led to reassess their own social values, commercialism, and, perhaps, their daily lives within a "pop culture."

Regardless of the viewers' responses, Warhol's piece brought them to question their conceptions of what constitutes art. That contact with a single entity could bring one to reconsider the nature of art and perhaps consider their own understanding of their place within a society consistent with the intentions of *A as E.*

Jackson uses Michael Heizer's 1969-70 earthworks, "Double Negative," to enable viewers to explore their conceptions of the art experience. "Double Negative" is comprised of two large cut slits in the rock-face that Heizer created in the Mormon Mesa outside of Overton, Nevada. The slits are 1500' x 30' x 50' deep. The work is remote and difficult to see even when at the site. The sculpture is best seen from space via satellite. Robert Smithson's (1938-73) "Spiral Jetty" that achieved much greater renown as an earthwork was also completed in 1970 (Adams, 1997, p. 526). In seeking predecessors for the earthworks it is our ancient ancestry from Egypt, the Mayans, the Easter Islands, Babylon, Stonehenge and the Great Wall of China that come to mind, unless one considers the trenches of WWI as sculptural. Most people who are familiar with "Double Negative" have only experienced the work through

photographs. These viewers, or contemplators of the work, must imagine or tacitly accept the great expanses of time that nature would have required to form the substructure of the work through processes of erosion (Adams, p. 93). "Double Negative" brings up Dewey's questions of the artist's intentionality as well as the idea that the mental image of the work constitutes the work without any necessity of actual personal contact for the work to be experienced. A conception of a work of art as constituting art fulfills Dewey's requirements for the art experience.

In an example outside the visual media, Jackson contemplates Dewey's response to the composer John Cage's 1952 performance of *4'33"* (Jackson, 1998, p. 70). Four minutes 33 seconds is how long the piece lasted. At the debut concert performed outdoors in Woodstock, New York, a musician came out and sat at the piano but did not play. A summer storm coincidently passed overhead with distant thunder (p. 79). The audience's emotional reaction ranged from anger to amusement, from boredom to intrigue. The audience, with preconceptions of what they defined as a music concert, had come in anticipation; their expectations before the performance and their reconsiderations of their responses shaped their experience. Some people recognized it as a joke; some people thought it embodied the philosophic essence of Zen Buddhism's "utopian transcendence" (Jackson, 1998, p. 81). Interviewed thirty years later, Cage noted that not only was there no such thing as naturally occurring silence but also that ambient, sounds naturally occurring or circumstantial, still "constitute music" (p. 81). In Deweyan terms it was not something that could be

"heard" but only experienced. The individual reaction determined what it was for each listener.

These three examples of Jackson's demonstrate the range and potential of artwork and experiences to which Dewey's theories can be applied. Jackson emphasizes that, as the viewer comes to terms with the new concepts in each of these works of art, Dewey's philosophy of *A as E* is reinforced. In these examples the viewer may potentially recognize an epiphany within their "art-centered experiences" (Jackson, 1998, p. 109). Heizer's land art, like Cage's musical experiments, "arouses thoughts of metaphysical extremes" (p. 94). They simultaneously express emptiness and fullness, absence and presence and force the viewer to examine "questions of art's criteria" (p. 95) both individually and societal. In the works by Heizer and Cage the "totality of our response to the work" broadens our "knowledge of the world" (p. 87), and extend the transitional parameters of art. With "Brillo Boxes" Warhol confronts the viewer with a "fuller set of considerations" (p. 87) about the nature of society, and multiples verses the encounter with aspects of individualization. All three works have characteristics that would lead us to classify them as "inferential art" that "embody implications" that allow or encourage multiple interpretations of the artwork. The lack of physical presence does not diminish the "transformative experience" of these works (p. 94). In all three cases Dewey's philosophy of art as experience offers insight to inform our understanding of "the postproduction phase of experience" (p. 106). Jackson focuses on the "epiphanic art-centered experiences," as well as the viewer's exploration of the intricacies of the artworks' internal structures

and the implications (p. 109) of their meanings and one's interpretations. "Dewey's theory focuses on experience and not on art objects per se" (p. 111). Jackson concludes that "the prior experiences of the artist or audience" define these works (p. 111), and aligns them with the central tenant of *A as E*. Jackson believes that Dewey "argues against those conceptions of art that deny the interactive nature of experience —including theories that divorce art from common experience . . ." (p. 112). All three works by Warhol, Heizer, and Cage fulfill this criterion of bringing the pedestrian into the central focus of art: Heizer's site is remote and isolated, yet meant to be discovered and documented; Cage's audience came to hear a concert and instead were left to contemplate the nature of shared silence; and Warhol entices his viewers to meditate upon the banality of production packaging as well as its simple visual appeal. Each encounter broadens the viewer's conceptions of how they define art. In turn, these formal, provocative art events could lead the viewer to recognize the continual occurrences of *art experiences* in their daily lives.

*Jackson Applies* A as E *to Education*

Dewey meant to cover all of experience, not simply art or education. Jackson reminds us that Dewey intended the reader to benefit personally from practicing his theory within the common experiences in their daily lives (Jackson, 1998, p. 122). His book title, *John Dewey and the Lessons of Art,* might lead one to expect that it discusses children and art. Although Jackson's chapter four is titled "Some Educational Implications of Dewey's Theory of Experience," he applies his insights

to education in no more than a cursory glance that is not directed toward children. Jackson warns us, that "full-scale treatment of Dewey's educational thought" would be "a major undertaking in and of itself" (p. 122). Perhaps Jackson is setting a goal for himself or suggesting one to others.

Jackson interprets *A as E* as embodying Dewey's desire for people to embrace experience beyond art and take life on as an art form to "add value to our lives" (Jackson, 1998, p. 124). Opening children's awareness to experience is the heart of creating the *learner's attitude.* Art-making creates and defines the students' attitude, then extends it as an approach encompassing literally everything else that children encounter. Approaching all curriculum subjects with a strategy of embracing new experiences and the perspective of the discoverer seeking revelation would foster and develop children's attitude as learners. Jackson sees Dewey's proposal as an approach to life as an organic whole. This is what makes *A as E* a philosophy that the students could use to see even their lunchroom interactions as an opportunity for "plain old lunch" to become "become something special" (p. 125).

Jackson points out that Dewey did not direct *Art As Experience* toward education, and offers two possible reasons for this decision. First, including educational issues would have rendered "his book far too long and unwieldy in content." Second, at that stage of his life "without a school of his own in which to experiment and try out ideas" the undertaking "was more than he was willing or able to do" (Jackson, 1998, p. xii). Jackson also postulates that Dewey might not have thought he had time to accomplish the task, or he did not take on the enterprise

"chiefly because he had not yet thought them [his ideas] through to his own satisfaction." "He thus left that task for others to accomplish" (p. xiii). Jackson sees Dewey emphasizing *unity, wholeness, and balance* in order to change "our habitual ways of thinking, feeling, and perceiving" and open "our encounters with individual works of art" so that they are "endless in their bounty" (p. xiv-xvi).

*The Problem with Experience*

Dewey in retrospect struggled with the word experience and contemplated replacing it with the word "culture" (Jackson, 1998, p. 2). Emerson' essay, "Experience," is a likely source of the meaning of the word as Dewey uses it (p. 18). One problem that Jackson sees with Dewey's use of the word experience is how contemporary readers relate to time, seemingly unable to separate the "past from present and present from future" (p. 3). Jackson observes that "experience is always linked to a past whose influence continues to operate in the present" (p. 47). I believe that our projection of the future exerts nearly as strong an influence on our ability to contend with the present, as do our impressions of the past. This prospect is especially valid when one considers the psychological studies that suggest that people do not remember the past; they remember their memory of the past which is inevitably altered by their current perceptions of themselves in that memory. The relationships of the past to the present and future is exactly why Dewey's definitive choice of the word "experience" so effectively conveys the expansive breadth of his conception.

Jackson cautions that when reading Dewey the danger "lies in treating an intellectual invention as the discovery of an unquestioned truth" (1998, p. 3). This danger is heightened "when we are fully immersed in experience" and "lose all sense of separation between self, object, and event" (p. 3). According to Jackson one of Dewey's main points is that the function of reflective thought is to "extricate oneself from problematic situations" (p. 56). Humans are problem-solving creatures; people solve problems through their experiences, by merging of knowledge and intuition.

Jackson agrees with a caution from Thomas Alexander, in seeking "to correct a common misunderstanding that arises from Dewey's effort to be clear as possible." In this case, it would be "to interpret the phrase problematic situation too narrowly" (1998, p. 56). Dewey wants "to expand and deepen the meaningfulness" of what individuals perceive (p. 57) by recognizing the "dynamic nature of perception," which is "increasingly enriched through the acquisition of new meanings" (p. 58). The continuous change in interpretations arises from the transitory nature of the experience of any work of art (p. 3). An audience participates through interpreting their experiences. Dewey defines this participatory interpreting as the "individualizing quality" (p. 8) of each person's experiences, filtered and bound together by emotion (p. 11). Thus, Dewey's quest for coherence is achieved by unifying emotional states (p. 13). "Emotionally charged" experiences are unified perceptions of one individual in the flow of experience. Within the experience the predilection to declare a project's "beginnings and endings" is a somewhat arbitrary

process. People inescapably create works in arrangements rather than as "natural occurrences" (p. 125). The interactive nature of art appreciation grows from the shared common experiences rather than from confining the meaning of an artwork by placing it "on a pedestal or in a world of its own" (p. 112). Dewey's "centrality of perception" is the recognition of "ever increasing clarity and depth having moral consequences" (p. 113). For Dewey this ethical lucidity raises art to its highest function: "removing prejudice" (*AE*, Dewey, 1934, p. 325). Dewey wholeheartedly believes that "the idea of art as a conscious idea is the greatest intellectual achievement in the history of humanity" (*AE*, p. 25).

### *F. Matthias Alexander, Universality and Dewey*

F. Mathias Alexander served as a seminal force in shaping Dewey's thought. In *John Dewey and the Lessons of Art*, Jackson observes that "not until he [Dewey] became acquainted with the "Alexander Technique" did he fully comprehend how certain aspects of his own theory of experience could be translated into practice" (Jackson, 1998, p. 152). Each of five major biographies recount Dewey's relationship with F. Matthias Alexander somewhat dismissively. Only Thomas Dalton in *Becoming John Dewey* (2002) accords F. M. Alexander any significant consideration. The dismissal of F. M. Alexander is surprising in light of Dewey's years of study with him and the admiration and personal conviction with which Dewey writes introductions to three of Alexander's books. Philip Jackson's *John Dewey and the Lessons of Art* is not a biography. Still, he goes further than any of the biographers by

emphasizing F. M. Alexander's influence in shaping Dewey's conception of man's place in a conscious universe. Jackson concludes from Dewey's introductions to F. M. Alexander's 1918, 1923, and 1932 books that Dewey had "personally undergone a transformation" through his early interaction with the "Alexander Technique" (Jackson , 1998, p. 139).

Biographers Dykhuizen, Ryan, Dearborn, and Martin, each noted Dewey's crediting F. M. Alexander with correcting at least three of his physical conditions: his posture, curing his back pain and alleviating his eye strain. George Dykhuizen, in *The Life and Mind of John Dewey*, 1973, notes that Dewey was referred to F. Matthias Alexander not only for physical issues, but for nervous tension as well. Fredrick Matthias Alexander was an Australian actor who came to America to avoid conscription into WWI (Dalton, 2002, p. 12). "He boasted of having perfected a method of breaking subconscious habits by rendering within conscious control the inhibitory mechanisms controlling neuromuscular processes" (p. 12). Dykhuizen states that "Alexander contended that most of civilized man's ills came when the development of man's body failed to keep pace with that of his brain and nervous system" (p. 181). In *John Dewey and the High Tide of American Liberalism*, 1995, Alan Ryan grants little credence to Alexander's "scheme of universal salvation" (p. 187). Ernest Nagel, a Columbia University colleague, (p. 119) called Dewey "superstitious" for falling for Alexander's ideas (Ryan, 1995, p. 187). Ryan

dismissively reduces Alexander's philosophy to a succinct: "the troubles of modern civilization could be traced to bad posture" (pp. 187-189).

Mary Dearborn's *Love in the Promised Land*, 1988, characterizes F. M. Alexander's relationship as another of Dewey's "genuine eccentric friendships" that he took "very seriously, often to the discomfiture of his friends" (p. 97). She views F. M. Alexander as an early chiropractor to whom Dewey was drawn to "heal over the old dualisms" between mind and body (p. 96). The "Alexander Technique" in its ultimate simplicity notes that: bad posture equals unnatural modes of thought. Dewey attributed F. M. Alexander's processes of breathing and posture for curing his ailments and "credited Alexander as a philosopher whose ideas contributed to his own intellectual development" (p. 97). After Dewey started seeing Alexander, a friend noted that Dewey "was a radically changed person" (Martin, 2002, p. 286). When the New Republic negatively reviewed F. M. Alexander's *Man's Supreme Inheritance*, (p. 286) Dewey "refused to write any further" for the magazine "unless something was done" to reconcile the falsity of the review (Dearborn, 1988, p. 97). In *The Education of John Dewey*, 2002, Jay Martin describes Dewey's going to Alexander for therapeutic relief starting in 1916, because he was "plagued with pyschophysiological problems" that flared up under stress (p. 285).

Although Dewey was acquainted with psychoanalysis, he was "indifferent to Freud," but found the F. M. Alexander's Method "congenial" with his own temperament and philosophy (Martin, 2002, p. 286). Following Dewey's

recommendation, Barnes consulted Alexander (Greenfeld, 1987, p. 63), but discontinued treatment after several visits because he "thought Alexander derivative" (Meyers, 2004, p. 46). Dalton saw F. M. Alexander as "an iconoclastic evolutionary theorist and physical therapist who provided Dewey with insights about the states of consciousness underlying his own intellectually significant experiences" (Dalton, 2002, p. 3). Dewey surely was aware that endorsing Alexander's ideas and schemes "threatened to compromise his personal and intellectual integrity," but he dismissed the critics, even referring several of his children to the practitioner (Martin, p. 286). F. M. Alexander was very complimentary of Dewey's wife Alice (p. 346), but their eldest daughter, Evelyn Dewey, was troubled by Alexander's prevalent detractors labeling of him as a "faith healer." Evelyn Dewey felt "anxiety about Alexander's growing influence on her father. She worried that her father was risking his reputation by endorsing a cult figure whose ideas lacked scientific respectability" (Dalton, 2002, p. 100). F. M. Alexander addressed the corrupted ills of modern life (p. 140) by tapping the powers of the subconscious, through the development of the natural powers of one's own judgment (p. 237). He encouraged his patients or students, to evolve their consciousness by adapting their minds and exerting control over their mental processes as they adapted to the new stresses of contemporary moral and cultural values (p. 12).

Dewey not only wrote introductions to three of Alexander's books, he also helped rewrite the books themselves (Dalton, 2002, p. 99). There is a 1916 photo of

Dewey and Alexander laughing together outdoors (p. 99); one has to wait until his ninth birthday party where he is surrounded by children to see an image of Dewey in which he looks as joyful (Boisvert, 1998, p. 160).

"Alexander's ideas were subsumed within a more global perspective about development and the effects of early intervention on learning" (Dalton, 2002, p. 101). His pupils were to learn through experiencing: when "applied within the classroom this made teaching dynamic and would equip the children to be experimenters" (p. 100). This coincides with Dewey's claim that studying with F. M. Alexander encouraged him to reach a new understanding of "the things which I had known —in the sense of theoretical belief— in philosophy and psychology" (p. 121). Alexander's approach changed what Dewey previously had known "into vital experiences which gave a new meaning" to his knowledge (p. 121).

Jackson accords F. M. Alexander's influence more significant weight on Dewey's philosophical path from Christian fundamentalism to the belief system that is at the core of *A as E*. Dewey expressed Alexander's influence when he spoke of the "function" that "creates the universality" of a work of art (*AE*, 1934, p. 68). Jackson's account differs from Dewey's biographers in his emphasis that Dewey studied with F. M. Alexander for more than 15 years, "beginning in 1916 and continuing into the 1930s and possibly beyond" (Jackson, 1998, p. 136). One could make the case that his 1939 introduction to the second edition of Alexander's 1932 book extends Jackson's claim to 23 years "and possibly beyond" (p. 136). The

Alexander Technique "sought to inculcate techniques of self-control and self-scrutiny" that seem closely akin to Buddhist practices in their goal of seeking "heightened awareness of the present moment" (p. 130). In his introduction to F. Matthias Alexander's *Man's Supreme Inheritance: Conscious Guidance and Control in Relation to Human Evolution in Civilization* (1918), Dewey credits F. M. Alexander with having grasped the strain and the dangers that beset human nature more lucidly than any other thinker as humankind "change[s] from the state of animal savagery to present civilization" (Dewey's Introduction to Alexander, 1918, p. xiii). Dewey identifies the crisis that F. M. Alexander has defined as "a conflict between the functions of the brain and the nervous system" (p. xiii), and that the Alexander Technique "offers a definite method for its realization" (p. xv). Educationally, Dewey credits F. M. Alexander as having moved teaching methodology from the "unnatural suppression of childhood which too frequently passes for school training" (p. xvi) toward "self-expressive" schools that develop the "power of intelligence" through the "freedom of physical action" and the recognition that "the spontaneity of childhood is a delightful and precious thing" (p. xvii). These are central premises to a Deweyan based art-curriculum.

In his Introduction to F. M. Alexander's *In Constructive Conscious Control of the Individual* (1923), Dewey writes that the Alexander Technique is "crucially needed" because of a "defective and lowered sensory appreciation and judgment" (Dewey's Introduction to Alexander, 1923, p. xx) stemming from a "perverted

consciousness" that "enters into our every act and thought" (F.M. Alexander, 1923, p. 163). As if in advertising, Dewey endorses the Alexander Technique as offering benefits that "include a changed emotional condition and a different outlook on life" (p. xxii). Throughout his essay, Dewey vouches for the empirical scientific base underlying Alexander's methodology and for F. M. Alexander's own sincerity. Dewey's tone throughout this introduction bears a defensive quality as he determinedly strives to distinguish Alexander from "miracle-mongers." Dewey clearly wishes to establish F. M. Alexander's method as demonstrating "a new scientific principle with respect to human behavior, as important as any principle which has ever been discovered in the domain of external nature" (p. xxix). Alexander is "creating a new sensory consciousness of new attitudes and habits" (p. xxxii), Dewey emphasizes the importance of the Alexander Technique to children: "Its proper field of application is with the young, with the growing generation, in order that they may come to possess as early as possible in life a correct standard of sensory appreciation and self-judgment" (p. xxxiii).

Dewey's introduction to F. M. Alexander's *The Use Of The Self: Its Conscious Direction in Relation to Diagnosis Functioning and the Control of Reaction* (1932) was published in the second edition in 1939. In it he argues that Alexander has "evolved" a technique that "may be truly called a physiology of the living organism" (Dewey's intro to Alexander, 1939, p. 8). Again, in this introduction, Dewey, as he had in his second introduction sixteen years earlier, mainly defends the

scientific viability of F. M. Alexander's methods, by concluding that this book "contains in my judgment the promise and potentiality of the new direction that is needed in all education" (p. 12).

Unquestionably Dewey's introductions to three of F. M. Alexander's books support Jackson's analysis that the Alexander Technique "became a significant source of insight" for Dewey in the use of breathing and posture as a "means of breaking old habits and establishing new ones" (Jackson, 1998, p. 138). Jackson agrees with Ryan, when he asserts from Dewey's perspective "what most needed fixing was people's attitudes toward themselves and one another" (p. 163). Through his painstaking experiential technique Alexander provides Dewey with a physical practice for developing an application for an interactive philosophy to integrate the experiential realms of mind and body.

In *A as E*, Dewey expresses his belief in the power of the subconscious mind and/or an existing universal source in which artists tap to engender their creations. "Subconscious maturation precedes creative production" through the efforts of "wit and will . . . as they all proceed from one living creature . . ." they "bond together below the level of intention" that is "born almost in spite of conscious personality" when the artist is "taken possession of by the appropriate muse and speaks and sings as some god dictates" (*AE*, 1934, p. 73). They "press forward toward some end dimly and imprecisely prefigured, groping their way as they are lured on by the identity of an aura in which their observations and reflections swim" (p. 73). "Imprecisely

prefigured" is quite a description of the mystical order of the origins of inspiration and has some echoings of current theoretical physics known collectively as "Super String Theory" (Greene, 1999).

F. M. Alexander was not a mystic. He was very grounded in his knowledge of the human body as the means, through the patterns and focus on breathing, to attune oneself to the reality, the ultimate individual reality, of living within one's own body. Dewey may well have maintained a daily practice of the Alexander Technique throughout the years of 1916 through the writing of *A as E* (1934) and into the 1940s. F. M. Alexander may be as significant to Dewey's development of a philosophy of aesthetics as was Barnes. The convergence of Dewey with Barnes and F. M. Alexander in the fullness of each of their manifestations may be the recipe of Art as Experience.

*Relation of Jackson's Lessons to Children and Educational Philosophy*

Despite Philip Jackson's many insights, *John Dewey and the Lessons of Art* does not directly apply A as E to the formation of children's curriculum. In the last 30 pages of his book, "Some Educational Implications of Dewey's Theory of Experience," Jackson reasons that Dewey's writings on education do not reflect his philosophy of aesthetics because "most were written before his theory of the arts had fully developed" (Jackson, 1998, p. 165). Jackson distinguishes between the function of a laboratory and a studio, arguing that this difference is why Dewey's own Laboratory School was not art-centered 30 years before he published *A as E*. He

concludes that Dewey's focus on the "occupations," or practical arts, stressed their connection to "life outside the school," rather than on "the artistic nature" of their activities (p. 166). If Dewey had been committed to a Studio School rather than a Laboratory School, he would have had a much harder time being funded by "those in control of the purse strings" (p. 166).

Dewey saw the collaboration of the whole community through the processes of learning by doing as the heart of democracy. He wanted schools to consider "emotional and physical needs as well as intellectual ones" (Jackson, 1998, p. 169) and this merging physical, emotional and mental practices reflects F. M. Alexander's ideas. The transformative nature of the Alexander Technique depended on the "new psychology as intrinsically social" (p. 169). Dewey sees children learning together by interacting, engaging with activities and sharing their experiences with each other. The experience of learning by doing keeps school from lapsing into dull drudgery. Engagement with the occupations —as with art— "requires the continual interplay of ideas and their embodiment in action" (p. 170).

Jackson asks us to imagine the effect on the Laboratory School had Dewey nourished his interest in art earlier (Jackson, 1998, p. 180). Perhaps an increased interest in the arts would have spurred Dewey to emphasize the "qualitative immediacy of experience" as well as the "emotional underpinnings" of expressive meaning (p. 181). Emphasizing art surely would have fostered greater development of students' perceptual skills (p. 181). Jackson believes that Dewey's philosophy of art

would have kept his educational theories focused on "crafting experiences akin to those undergone in the creation and enjoyment of works of art" (p. 182). Art changes the child's "knowledge into vital experiences" (p. 138), and evokes the Alexander Technique, translating experience into practice (p. 152). In this process, Jackson says, "we are carried out beyond ourselves to find ourselves" (p. 61).

*Symbolic Meaning*

If the child is guided through a series of steps that directly analyze and creatively solve problems, then this strategy engages the child in processes of cause and effect, of bringing order from chaos. These skills are essential in the experience of art making. For example, teaching the fundamentals of cubism would be a lesson in multiple perspectives, challenging the child to imagine what a still-life looks like from behind, from a birds-eye view and from the underside. The cubist lesson thus becomes a vital exercise in envisioning and simultaneity. In humanistic terms, this lesson may teach empathy as well as offering opportunities to introduce and reinforce a crucial step in understanding algebraic equations. When Jackson suggests that "art-centered experiences are contingent upon some antecedent state of mind," he acknowledges "visual art (principally painting) as being peculiarly concerned with spiritual matters" (Jackson, 1998, p. 117). The "notion of embedded meaning" that underlies "unity of form and content" (p. 118) is at the heart of a child's interpretation. Interacting with many levels of meaning, the child grows aware of the

deeper symbolic meaning. This is one of the great gifts of the inclusion of art in a child's study.

The ultimate goal of art in education is to create a "medium of expression" that "becomes a means of communication" by which "meaning in conveyed" (Jackson, 1998, p. 40). The art-making experience encompasses a wide range of valuable lessons that begin with the necessity of planning and preparation. This includes savoring and anticipating the process before beginning, balancing memories of freshly discovered solutions, and lingering reflections that will be honed for later redeployment. Such feelings overlap in all intellectual projects and, for children, help develop the discipline of focusing their attention. Art-making is the work that the focused mind achieves through the concentration of a "heightened awareness of the present moment" (Jackson, 1998, p. 130). For the child art offers mental activities to master the discipline of focused "mindfulness," while it opens paths to "becoming a more fully functioning person" (p. 135). Perception is the awareness of "noticing or sensing something" by coming to care about it (p. 149) and developing "the habit of doing so automatically or naturally" (p. 150). The value of applying Jackson's analysis of Dewey's ideas to children's art-making is that the art experiences of children become their foundations for viewing the events of her or his everyday life through the philosophy of *A as E*.

*Schools of Tomorrow*

John Dewey wrote *Schools of Tomorrow* (1915) with his eldest daughter, Evelyn. Between 1915 and 1924 the book went through fifteen reprintings, surely a testament to the its popularity. In the Preface, John Dewey states that they wish to show what happens when schools put into practice, "each in its own way," theories that "have been pointed to as the soundest and best ever since Plato" (*ST*, Dewey & Dewey, 1915 pref.). These practices show clear "tendencies toward greater freedom" and an environment that identifies more with the child's outlook (*ST*, pref.). Dewey declares that the most important characteristic shared by the best schools he and his daughter visited is "the recognition of the role education must play in a democracy" (*ST*, pref.).

The book begins with a quotation from Rousseau's *Emile: On Education* (1761): "We know nothing of childhood, and with our mistaken notions of it the further we go in education the more we go astray" (*ST,* Dewey & Dewey, 1915, p. 1). This sets the tone for the book and is Dewey's main theme, one that would be highly relevant to anyone visiting a public school today. The truth of Rousseau's insight is amazingly accurate and intensely baffling. Since every adult experienced their own childhoods it seems only rational that all adults would profoundly understand the nature of a child. Dewey observes that "the key-note of all modern efforts for educational progress" is based on striving to understand the true capacities and powers of children (p. 1). Where would educational reform be if it were based on a

pedagogy that incorporated a true understanding of the motivations and interests of children, of who children really are? This is the underlying question the Deweys are asking their readers and educators to contemplate and use in practice.

Evelyn and John Dewey's observations in *Schools of Tomorrow* are drawn from the school systems of Chicago and Riverside Illinois; Indianapolis, Gary and Interlaken, Indiana; Columbia, Missouri; Fairhope, Alabama; and New York City. They offer no full list of schools, but one may be gathered from the text and captions of the twenty-seven photographs. The photographs show children engaged in the Deweyan occupations of sewing, woodworking, house-building, model-making, gardening, cooking, cobbling, typesetting and press-printing, constructing sets and staging plays, dancing and other various in-and-outdoors activities. Only two of the photographs depict traditional classrooms and Jackson observes "the accompanying captions describe the students as singing songs and playing games" (Jackson, 1998, p. 175). Jackson argues that the photographs overtly say that in the schools of tomorrow children are not sitting passively "and dull-eyed, reading a textbook or listening to a teacher." Instead they are "moving from place to place, singing, dancing, constructing objects, experimenting, and having a good time in the process" (p. 175). In their book, Dewey and his daughter clearly "were far more interested in total reform of the schools than in incremental improvement of ongoing practices" (p. 176). Jackson astutely observes that *Schools of Tomorrow* and its photographs exemplify the ideal activities the Deweys document traveling from school to school. The pictures "speak

louder than do words about what the Dewey's would like to have seen happening in schools" (p. 174).

*Schools of Tomorrow* is characteristically repetitive. The Deweys' observations of the school activities overlap and are repeated. Lip-service is paid to balancing the methodology of traditional schools with the activity-based schools the Deweys envision as the future. Assessing the value of art in education Dewey says "if every pupil has an opportunity to express himself, to show what are his particular qualities, the teacher will have material on which to base her plans of instruction" (*ST*, Dewey & Dewey, 1915, p. 138). This dictum is fundamental for writing an art-based curriculum.

The Deweys acknowledge that students benefit from the vocational skills learned in pursuing the occupations. Two of the last pictures in their book illustrate this assertion. Public School 26 in Indianapolis, was "located in the poor, crowded colored district of the city and has only colored pupils" (*ST*, Dewey & Dewey, 1915, p. 207). Dewey sees that school's mission as helping these students "become healthy, happy, and competent both economically and socially" (p. 207). However, Dewey says this effort "is not an attempt to solve the 'race question' nor yet an experiment suited only to colored pupils" (p. 207). He strategically clarifies that the "school is for colored children only in the sense that the work has been arranged in relation to the conditions in the neighborhood" (pp. 207 -208). To dismiss the embedded notion that the African-American students experienced unique problems to students from any

other cultural or ethnic group Dewey says: “Yet the success of the experiment would mean a real step forward in solving the ‘race question’ and peculiar problems of any immigrant district as well” (p. 208). In another of the photographs, a group of 14 African-American male students work in an industrial kitchen. Another photograph portrays older African-American male students learning to cobble shoes. The girls of Public School 26 learn to “trim hats,” and their “domestic science classes include lessons in” purchasing, cost comparison, food chemistry, and “large-quantity cooking” (p. 214). Dewey concludes that “the school has been the cause of the growth of community spirit in increased civic and social activities” (p. 218). Such schools, Dewey believes, will help create “a community where the citizens will be prosperous and independent.” Although “changes in social conditions must take place before this can happen,” such schools provide “perhaps the surest way of helping along the changes” (pp. 226-227). Dewey steadfastly believes in democracy, and cautions that “it is fatal for a democracy to permit the formation of fixed classes” (p. 313). Dewey’s consummate belief in a progressive future can be summed up in the last sentence of Dewey and Evelyn’s book: “Schools such as we have discussed in this book —and they are rapidly coming into being in large numbers all over the country— are showing how the ideal of equal opportunity for all is to be transmuted into reality” (pp. 315-316). In 1915 to envision such a future for the nation’s school system, one that promised to cross racial, social, ethnic backgrounds and gender biases in educating new generations for democracy was a vision for social progress for American schools, one that the nation still struggle to fulfill nearly 100 years later.

Dewey's vision of a truly democratic public school system still remains as a promise for the schools of tomorrow.

*Dewey School*

In 1936 Katherine Camp Mayhew and Anna Camp Edwards published *The Dewey School: The Laboratory School of the University of Chicago* 1896–1903. Their account of those seven years of the school very much mirrors Dewey's own impressions as set down in *The Child and the Curriculum* (1902), *The School and Society* (1900) and *Postscript" Three Years of the University Elementary School* (1899). Mayhew and Edwards, under the rubric "Artistic Expression," observe: "all the expressive activities at all stages of growth, were the child's means of social intercourse, his modes of communication, as well as avenues for individual expression" (Mayhew, 1936 - 347). Dewey has redefined art as "an attitude of spirit, a state of mind. . . " (p. 348) that accords art a central role in the school. In the Laboratory school they see "a spirit of union which gave vitality to the arts, and depth and richness to the other work" (p. 348). According to Mayhew and Edwards "music and the graphic arts" in the school "were always regarded as of peculiar value, for by means of them the child's appreciation of his experience found its best and highest expression" (p. 199). They also say for Dewey, "The artistic attitude is the ideal attitude of interest, and that if a child could be animated by such interest, he would bring forth results in his activities that would be accompanied by an enrichment of his intellectual and emotional life" (p. 348). Clearly, Mayhew and Edwards conclude "the

school seems to have had a groping faith that genuine artistic expression in any medium may grow out of the manual arts and carry on to their spiritual meaning many of the processes of everyday life" (p. 348).

In the same chapter, under the subheading of "Esthetic Expression of Experience," they argue "only through the idealization of their own life and interests that children become creative in their art. it is evident that opportunities for such expression arise from this source. 'Things to do' naturally grow out of interests. . ." (Mayhew & Edwards, 1936, p. 359). "Any experience which contributes both food to the mind and power to the hand should exert a social influence of the highest ethical value. Because art does this, it promises to be a permanent educational factor" (p. 361).

*Lessons for Today*

Laurel N. Tanner, in her *Dewey's Laboratory School Lessons for Today*, (1997), asserts "that in Dewey's experimental school aesthetic experience was not a special kind of activity confined to art" (p. 46). She says Dykhuizen understood Dewey's position was that "the consummatory fulfillment in aesthetic experience is potential in all experience" (Tanner, 1997, p. 46). "For Dewey, inquiry, thinking, and problem solving were all the same" (p. 83). Dewey explores this theme in *How We Think* (1910), suggesting that "reflective thought; it alone is truly educative in value" (*HWT*, p. 3). Here Dewey argues that "the imaginative stories poured forth by children. . . ." do "stimulate reflective thought. . . ." and "these imaginative

enterprises often precede thinking [of] the close-knit type [and] prepare the way for it" (p. 3). The act of searching through new materials, Dewey says, is an "the attitude of suspended conclusions" and is a process the child employs in art-making by entering a state of exploration while they are experimenting. "To maintain the state of doubt and to carry on systematic and protracted inquiry —these are the essentials of thinking" (p. 13). Tanner characterizes *How We Think* as "a kind of handbook for elementary teachers" (Tanner, p. 84). Near the end of *How We Think* Dewey declares that "when attention to means is inspired by recognition of the end they serve, we have the attitude typical of the artist, an attitude that may be displayed in all activities, even though [they may] not [be] conventionally designated arts" (*HWT*, p. 220). By the time of Dewey's revised edition of *How We Think* (1933), Tanner points out that "activities known as 'projects' increasingly had found their way into the school" (Tanner, 1997, p. 85). Projects impel the students to focus and create their own solutions to problems. "Interest and attention have two beneficial effects: They make it more likely that children will learn, and they result in a class that is controlled naturally" (p. 122).

### *Thomas M. Alexander:* John Dewey's Theory of Art, Experience & Nature: The Horizons of Feelings *(1987)*

Thomas M. Alexander, in *John Dewey's Theory of Art, Experience & Nature: The Horizons of Feelings* (1987), more fully investigates the scope of Dewey's philosophy related to art than virtually any other writer. He convincingly argues that

it is futile to try and dissect a single book of Dewey's as separate and isolated from the 67-year body of his writing. Following this observation we may see the four works *Democracy and Education* (1916)*, Experience and Nature* (1925)*, Art as Experience* (1934)*,* and *Experience and Education* (1938), as stages of a continuous exploration. Alexander's "Introduction," "The Art of Experience," his last chapter, and his "Conclusion: Creativity, Criticism, and Community" are thematically intertwined. The introduction, last chapter and conclusion comprise nearly one third of Thomas Alexander's tightly written text. These sections most directly explore art. From them we can gather insight on Dewey's views of art and how to apply them to the five-year-old as he or she sits, making art. In this process, the child opens their experience to the pure essence of what it is that Dewey seeks to reveal about our inter-most natures. Thomas Alexander's study deepens one's understanding of *A as E,* as well as the ramifications of employing Dewey's philosophy of experience and expression as the foundation of children's curriculum.

In chapter 5, "The Art of Experience," Thomas Alexander says: "Dewey espoused that the aesthetic was intrinsically an act of expression or communication" (T. M. Alexander, 1987, p. 183). Both of those characterizations go to the very heart of art as an educational instrument and discipline. Paraphrasing Dewey, Alexander pronounces: "The test of any philosophy's ability to understand experience is to be found in its treatment of the aesthetic dimension" (p. 184). "Through art man is able to realize the potentiality for meaning" (p. 185). When the "attitude of the artist" is

"extended to all experience" then "life itself is capable of becoming an art" (p. 185). The task of pedagogy and "the task of Dewey's philosophy is to bring this moral home" (p. 185). Alexander's interpretation of Dewey is that: "The work of art comes to be the project of sharing an organized response to the universe" (p. 188) and "the democratic community is the community which has undertaken the liberating responsibility of the art of experience" (p. 185).

Thomas Alexander reminds us that, in 1884, Dewey was 25 when he "speculated about a 'new psychology' based on "the rich and varied experience" of daily life. Alexander concludes: "In one sense, *Art as Experience* is the fulfillment of that youthful project" (T. M. Alexander, 1987, p. 188) as "art forces us to think about how human beings are related to the world and to each other." He believes *A as E* 's philosophy is based in Dewey's idea that "the work of art marks the random occasion for man to enjoy the abstract harmony of his own faculties" (p. 189).

Thomas Alexander interprets Dewey's association with the Barnes Foundation as demonstrating "that he saw the potential educational function of such institutions" (T. M. Alexander, 1987, p. 190). Perhaps through the Barnes Foundation, Dewey also became more than aware of, and became part of the educational opportunities "such institutions" offered. Although Thomas Alexander refers to Barnes as "irascible" and "one of the strangest and least predictable friendships in Dewey's life" (p. 55) he omits any mention of F. Matthias Alexander.

Thomas Alexander asserts that, for Dewey, art is the "existential and historical response to the human condition and serves "as the inner consummatory value of responding to the world with articulate sharable meaning" (T. M. Alexander, 1987, p. 192). Through art-making, perception activates exploration "where the possibilities for the significant configuration of the world are actualized" (p. 197) in "the struggle to make sense of the world" (p. 206). "Art thus represents the most successful effort to control the chance conditions by which such experiences are had" (p. 200). The horizon of meaning is "the unifying qualitative sense of the whole," and must be present in the individual parts (p. 201) where "moments of genuine thinking" (p. 202) mark those experiences and illuminate avenues to unite the current moment with the impression of past experiences. Dewey reflected: "Thinking is pre-eminently an art" (*EN*, Dewey, 1958, p. 378). Experience is constrained "because of its inherent finitude" (T. M. Alexander, 1987, p. 211). The sense of closure comes through the "very possibility of meaning." An artist is "a discerning critic or create by luck alone" (p. 211). This echoes Dewey's "Art is the sole alternative to luck" (*EN*, p. 372).

One may gain experience gradually (T. M. Alexander, 1987, p. 218) rather than in "intensified moments or epiphanies" (p. 244). This circumstance certainly is true of children whose understanding of a process grows through repeated interactions in an activity that transforms their expression (p. 220). Such practices create an emotional link, essential to our "capacity to become involved with a subject

matter or a medium" (p. 222). From direct action students and artists' responses are articulated. "Expression refers to an interaction" (p. 229) with the created object marking "the focus of our action" (p. 230).

Intuition allows the artist and viewer to experience the individuality of the expression and to realize the "wholeness" and "integration," or sense of "self-belonging" (T. M. Alexander, 1987, p. 254). Thomas Alexander describes Dewey's use of imagination as consisting of "the ability to grasp the meaning of the present" and the capacity to direct action to create "its ideal possibilities" (p. 262) in a projection of the future. A teacher guiding students to conceptualize their imaginations by contemplating the possibilities would be involving the students in a daily exploration of the curriculum. Thus the teacher would foster a community founded on creative expression. Such a community would clearly meet one of Dewey's definitions of a "democracy" (p. 266).

"Art is the very process of imaginatively enlarging experience, thereby establishing communication through education" (T. M. Alexander, 1987, p. 271). This application of *Art as Experience* "relocates works of fine art back into their social contexts." Thomas Alexander "maintains that it is here that we find the fruition of Dewey's lifelong quest for a comprehensive theory of experience" (p. 266).

In his "The Conclusion: Creativity, Criticism, and Community," Thomas Alexander writes that Dewey ultimately meant that art is the "transformation of the powers of nature into expressive media giving shape and significance to human life."

He held that "the art of life [is] the goal behind Dewey's ethics, his philosophy of democracy, and his theory of education" (T. M. Alexander, 1987, p. 269). "To treat life artistically," he continues, "is to exercise both imagination and reflection toward the exploration of the possibilities of the present" (p. 269). Such an exploration of the curriculum's possibilities is the process that engages the student's imagination and brings learning and teaching to the classroom.

# CHAPTER V:

# OTHER WRITERS OF THE BARNES FOUNDATION

# ON ART AND EDUCATION

John Dewey began the second paragraph of the preface to *A as E*, "I am somewhat embarrassed in an effort to acknowledge indebtedness to other writers on the subject" (*AE*, Dewey, 1934, p. vii). He closes the preface stating his "greatest indebtedness" is not just to Barnes but to the Foundation: "Whatever is sound in this volume is due more than I can say to the great educational work carried on in the Barnes Foundation" (p. viii). Dewey is making a definite distinction between Barnes and the Foundation, in this he is acknowledging the other members of the Foundation and the influence of their work in his aesthetic philosophy. Dewey makes this clear in his concluding acknowledgement: "I should be glad to think of this volume as one phase of the widespread influence the Foundation is exercising" (p. viii).

In chapter IV one focus was on Albert Combs Barnes as a person, a friend, and the primary influence on the development of John Dewey's aesthetics. Now I will look at the Foundation itself for possible influences on Dewey's philosophy of art, education and the formation of curriculum. The essence of the Foundation is not the collection, now valued at more than a billion dollars (Glass, 1997, p. 9); the heart of the Foundation is the philosophy that is most specifically reflected and formalized for the greater public through essays in the *Journal of The Barnes Foundation* and its publications.

Dewey was not the only person of significance whom Barnes gathered to serve on the Board and write for *Journal*. Five *Journals* were published between April 1925 and April 1926 with five other authors who accompanied Dewey and Barnes. After the initial issue of the *Journal,* Barnes had two articles in each edition and Dewey's work was in four of the five with his dedication address at the museum's opening and the three articles discussed in chapter IV. The remaining articles were written by the other board members. The only outside contribution was a brief parable that had been read at the opening ceremonies.

In 1934, Dewey had been in association with Barnes for seventeen years. Dewey was the Foundation's Director of Education and credited Barnes as the source of his aesthetic education. Barnes was the architect of the Foundation's educational policy that he said was based on Dewey's philosophy of teaching and learning. Barnes's arranged the museum's paintings in "wall units." The grouping of the pieces was to present the development of particular aspect of his view of plasticity. Barnes method was to present the paintings not as individuals but as a "wall picture" expressing and reinforcing notable qualities. Visitors were led in groups with that the Foundation staff directing the viewers' experience. "The paintings are arranged not by artist or period, but according to aesthetic and educational aims" (Glass, 1997, p. 97). "The Foundation regards supplying information of any kind about the paintings as a distraction that hinders viewers' developing an appreciation of the works themselves" (p. 97). The intention was to remove all defining information so that the

presentation would be an emotional and sensual experience in which the viewers would see the paintings in a new and potentially life-changing way.

Barnes's methodology surely was modeled after the salon of Gertrude and Leo Stein at which he first came in contact with a variety of paintings hanging together. One can imagine Gertrude and Leo pointing out aspects of plasticity linking the innovations between artists and movements. Period photos of the Stein's apartment show clearly their "salon style" method of display, characterized by hanging paintings on every available space on the wall.

Although as Newman Robert Glass states in "Theory and Practice in the Experience of Art: John Dewey and the Barnes Foundation," the foundation's aesthetic theory and policies "bear no resemblance whatsoever to Dewey's theories." Dewey chooses to characterize the foundation as exemplifying the "practice of his philosophy of education" (Glass, 1997, p. 103). However, Glass writes, "The Foundation's inflexible approach to teaching an already established truth is not at all in harmony with Dewey's feelings on the importance of open inquiry—to be a dogmatic Deweyan is a contradiction in terms" (p. 103).

Beyond his treatise, *The Art in Painting*, Barnes's articles in his journals are our clearest link to his own thinking. Barnes was a very complex man who, despite himself, was able to hold a core group together. Barnes brought in, and let go of people when they disagreed or strayed from his stipulated mission. In this process the Foundation developed and refined a rigid view of art.

*Barnes's Journal Articles*

Barnes's own articles enable us to flush out the Foundation's philosophy. In his article "The Shame in the Public Schools of Philadelphia" in the first *Journal of The Barnes Foundation,* Barnes leads with one of his characteristic bombasts on individuals and institutions. He attacks the Philadelphia public schools as being from an "obsolete system of the past," that "robs art of its indispensable personal and expressive element" (Barnes, 1925b, p. 13). He continues with the criticism that the school system shows no sign of "intelligent organization" and "in all aspects it [the Philadelphia public school system] sins against fundamental educational principles" (p. 14). The "subsidiary instruction" is of "tea and chatter, the social-climbing and lime-lighting, which have made Philadelphia the laughing stock of the country . . ." (p. 14). Barnes then aims at the Director of Art in Public Schools, Mr. Dillaway, as a counterfeit thinker, of threadbare conceptions, an unintelligent, spoutter of "ritualistic mummery attendant upon a total confusion of educational and art values" (p. 15). Barnes punches him as ignorant, shameless, closed-minded demoralizer of students. Barnes finds his hostility to modern art "and his willingness to aid and abet popular hysteria and prejudice when it appears" . . . as absolute "demagoguery" (p. 15). "Mr. Dillaway's grotesque vaudeville performances" have brought Philadelphia "universal ridicule" and made it "still more ridiculous" (pp. 16-17). Barnes prohibits the school system's teachers from entering the Foundation's museum. He rationalized his decision by pointing out that the Foundation's "standards of both education and art

appreciation, and those represented by the system of public schools, are absolutely irreconcilable" (p. 17).

In the second *Journal* Barnes includes his chapter on Picasso from *The Art in Painting* that begins, "The obvious contrast between Picasso's work and that of most of the great masters of the past has given the impression that he stands outside the familiar traditions of painting" (Barnes, 1925b, p. 14; Barnes, 1925a, p. 389). The last sentence from the 1925 book and the article is: "Picasso's sensitiveness and his power to assimilate are far too great to allow his unreflectiveness to degenerate into mere imitativeness or superficiality, but his wavering does make him less powerful and original than the men of first rank" (Barnes, 1925b, p. 22; Barnes, 1925a, p. 393). In the third edition he changes the first sentence of the chapter, adds a synopsis of Picasso's paintings between 1920 -1934 and changes the last sentence. The 3rd edition's chapter begins: "Picasso (1881-) ranks second only to Matisse in the importance of his achievements in contemporary painting, and his influence upon young painters has been greater than that of any other artist of his epoch" (Barnes, 1937, p. 369). Barnes ends the third edition entry on Picasso with: "In the same way, his cubistic paintings are in most respects less satisfactory than those of his 'blue period.' Such veerings marked with partial retrogression suggest an impulsive temperament, going off at a tangent from the line of maximum advance rather than using every new element of technique to deepen and enrich a fundamentally organic grasp of the world of plastic forms" (p. 373).

That Barnes' reconsidered ranking of Picasso as "second only to Matisse" might still have been going against the overriding American consensus on Picasso. In America, Picasso was predominately viewed, as he was characterized in the reviews from his 1911 New York debut, as "being greeted with ridicule and hostility" (Henry, 2006, p. 11). The Metropolitan Museum curator passed on including Picasso declaring he "saw nothing in Picasso," vouching that "such mad pictures would never mean anything in America" (p. 11). In light of Barnes's reconsidered assessment of Picasso, Dewey's total exclusion of Picasso from *A as E* was his own choice, although it would have been with Barnes's knowledge as he read Dewey's manuscript before publication.

Barnes says his next article "Art Teaching that Obstructs Education" is at the request of "many teachers of art," and will be the first in a continuing series in the *Journal*. His premise is to expose "some of the existing theories and practices with which teachers have been saddled by school authorities" (Barnes, 1925d, p. 44). Before beginning his analysis Barnes declared that most of these methodologies "stifle both self-expression and appreciation" and "erect almost insuperable barriers to that development of individual intelligence and the rational enjoyment of life, which are the chief purposes of education" (p. 44).

Barnes declared the Denman Ross Method is founded upon "a misunderstanding of scientific method," and "a false idea of the psychology of artistic creation" (Barnes, 1925d, p. 45). He declares Ross's method "charlatanry" and a

dogmatic system of forced formulas that "deprive art of everything fresh, living, or distinctive" (p. 46). He says Ross is ignorant of human nature and science and his method is designed to "establish habits of subservience" (p. 46).

The next *Journal's* last article continues "Art Teaching that Obstructs Education" with an analysis of Dynamic Symmetry and The Pach System. Barnes concludes the Dynamic System is simplistic and naïve and does not "merit serious consideration" (Barnes, 1925f, p. 41). Barnes deems the method inapplicable with "dogmatic assumptions," and "a complete dearth of personal vision" (p. 43). Barnes damns the *New York Times* for commending the method with a review "in which every sentence throbs with pleasure at the sight of little children obeying authority and never making any choices of their own except between Tweedledum and Tweedledee" (p. 43).

Barnes says the Pach System "marshals an array of platitudes" that are hollow, vaporous and "pseudo-scientific dressing" from which "the hopeless superficiality of his vision becomes apparent" (Barnes, 1925f, pp. 46-47). During his tirade against Pach, Barnes returns to one of his familiar themes that further explains Dewey's relationship to cubism. "He [Pach] swallows entire the meaningless cubistic claim to have 'translated the chaos of the world of appearances' into 'the order brought out of it by the mind.' What the cubists actually did attain to was not a deeper grasp of realities, but a surface-decoration, interesting at its best, but never very moving" (p. 48).

In the third *Journal* Barnes also nearly duplicates his entry on Cezanne from *The Art in Painting* with one extra sentence: "Cezanne, in other words, is a connoisseur's painter" (Barnes, 1925f, p. 125). By the third edition of *A in P* Barnes expanded the chapter on Cezanne.

The fourth *Journal* includes Barnes's chapter on Renoir with minor alterations. Barnes changed a comparison from "harmonious as a fugue or symphony" in *A in P* (Barnes, 1925a, p. 332) to "harmonious as a musical symphony or a work of polyphonic scope" in the *Journal* (Barnes, 1926a, p. 21). By the third edition his chapter on Renoir, as with his treatment of Picasso and Cezanne, also went through a somewhat significant revision. The changes reveal that Barnes's view of the artists' works and his writings on them were part of a continuous reassessment of their influence.

Barnes's other entry in the next to last *Journal* was "Educational Disorder at the Metropolitan Museum, New York." Barnes claims that Mr. Elliott, the Director of the Educational Work at the Metropolitan Museum, "confused mixture of platitude and untenable dogma" reveal how "certain fundamental and universally accepted principles of education are utterly ignored in high and influential circles." Barnes says that Elliott's "limited formula . . . becomes a mere engine of enslavement" (Barnes, 1926b, pp. 46- 47). Barnes says Elliott's educational philosophy "inevitably implies is that it is always reasonable to follow convention, never reasonable to depart from it"

and declares that "the kind of teaching represented by Mr. Elliott's dogma is fatal to either appreciation or creation of works of art" (p. 48).

In the last *Journal* he included "The Evolution of Contemporary Painting" that was abridged from *A in P*. Barnes says, "The idea of abstract form divorced from a clue, however vague, of its representative equivalent in the real world is sheer nonsense" (Barnes, 1926c, p. 134). "Where Picasso abstracted an element in a situation, Matisse dealt with the whole situation as it exists in reality. The error in Picasso's cubistic excursions is that he ignores the fundamental psychological fact that *continuity* is the essential feature of perception" (p. 26). Barnes's conclusion is that "Nothing of the importance or significance of Renoir or Cezanne has appeared, although several men have shown a form in process of development that may reach the importance and strength of the best of Picasso and Matisse" (p. 27).

Barnes's final article ending the *Journal of the Barnes Foundation* was his "Day-Dreaming in Art Education." Here Barnes is setting up his dismissal of Leo Stein whose criticism of *A in P* in the *New Republic* had been such a profound disappointment to him. Barnes begins his rebuttal of Stein by addressing the "inequitable organization of society" and asks if "the services of the leisure class justify the exemption of a whole group of people from productive labor" (Barnes, 1926d, p. 137). Barnes strategy is to identify Stein as an elitist of the "leisure class." Barnes suggests the experience of physical toil enriches intelligence, enlightenment and reflective thought. He muses that day-dreams "are often elaborated into plausible

fictions with extraordinary ingenuity," but the "impact of unadorned realities is not more enlightened but only more deluded." Barnes concludes "unless the ideals are practicable . . . . they are moonshine" and "nonsense" (pp. 44-45). He brings this reflection to characterize Leo Stein, saying that Stein exemplifies this "precious occupation of the ivory tower" by offering disparaging criticism without any positive suggestions "but petulant and pernicious" idle day-dreaming (p. 45).

Although Barnes says Stein commends the "part of the book that deals with objective, plastic qualities," it is his view of Stein as overreaching that draws Barnes's true ire as "he [Stein] objects to the parts that relate to educational principles" (Barnes, 1926d, p. 45). He dismisses Stein as having "no experience in educational practice" and promulgating the dogmatic and unsupported assertions "of his dream world" (p. 45). He contends that Stein operates from a "sublime aloofness" that "his ostensibly objective judgments have no validity" and are of "a psychological impossibility" (p. 46). "Persons whose experience in educational practice give weight to opinion, state that the purpose of education is to distinguish between better and worse and that the student is ordinarily led to form his preferences through the impact upon him of the preference of others" (p. 47). Barnes characterizes "the majority of people who profess an interest in art" as "dilettantes, sentimentalists, and antiquarians," and that they lack an understanding of the "plastic quality" that "requires a particular type of insight that needs specific training," and "is unknown or abhorrent" to them (p. 47). "*The Art in Painting* is an emphatic

challenge to the sentimental as well as to the academic habit of mind." Barnes's criticism is that "Mr. Stein's demands would leave the field entirely in possession of those who are really benighted." Barnes asserts that if individuals follow Stein's path, "education in art will be little more than a myth until the present situation is radically transformed" (p. 48). Barnes offers the complex rationalization: "Mr. Stein's error is the aged one that mistakes the individuality which is meaningless impulse, for true freedom" (p. 48). He concludes: "The judgments in *The Art in Painting* are offered not as finalities but as challenges, and that fact is repeatedly stated in its text. If anyone's individuality is so feeble that he is obliged to give assent to every debatable assertion, little is to be hoped for from him in any event" (p. 48).

This synopsis of Barnes's articles from the *Journal* shows clearly that Barnes considered his collection to be for the purpose of promulgating his educational philosophy. The articles make clear he viewed himself to be deeply involved in the theory of art education and that he studied the practices and ideology of others by holding them up to his philosophy. Although in practice Barnes governed the education of others with a determined hand, he clearly meant to present his methodology in Deweyan terms of encouraging self-expression and self-discovery.

Barnes makes no statement that this is the last issue of the *Journal.* On the last page there is an invitation to apply to the "Summer Course in Europe." The "tuition fee is $100, of which one-half is payable on enrollment" (Barnes, 1926d, p. 137).

## *Other Voices of* The Journal of the Barnes Foundation

*The Journal of The Barnes Foundation* also includes articles by four other members of the Foundation's board. They also shaped the Foundation's philosophy and Dewey's view of art education. Paul Guillaume, the Foundation's Foreign Secretary, writes two brief essays on the collection. Laurence Buermeyer, Mary Mullen, and Thomas Munro are the Associate Directors of Education under Dewey and have articles in each of the *Journals.* They are significant voices and interpreters of the Foundation's methods of art education; they are influenced by and are influences upon Dewey and his aesthetic philosophy that will become *A as E.*

### *Mary Mullen*

The first *Journal* begins with Mary Mullen's article "The Barnes Foundation: An Experiment in Education." She says the Foundation's "purpose is education in the widest sense of the word" though it primarily centers on the fine arts (Mullen, 1925a, p. 33). Mullen states that the Foundation's Program is based on the "fundamental conceptions of 'democracy' and 'education' as these are set forth in the work of modern thinkers, and more particularly in that of John Dewey" (p. 3). "The specific work of education grew out of the understanding of human nature and its possibilities" (p. 4). She says the foundation's educational principles are based on Dewey's *Democracy and Education,* and their mission is dedicated to "an encouragement of initiative, of independence, of personal distinction in all the relations and activities of life" and "to bring them within the grasp of the plain man"

(p. 5). She calls for the reorganization of the "existing antiquated and unintelligent methods of art instruction and supervision" (p. 7), and announces, that the Foundation will sponsor a series of public lectures, as a service to the community; "an invitation to deliver the first of these has been extended to John Dewey" (p. 8).

Mullen's second article, "A First Requisite in Art Education," was in the next *Journal*. She writes what will be one of Dewey's main premises in *A as E*: "works of art are thus linked to experience and become valuable and meaningful through the development of interests identical with those of their creators" (Mullen, 1925b, p. 33). Dewey rephrase Mullen's idea when he writes: "We lay hold of the full import of a work of art only as we go through in our own vital processes the processes the artist went through in producing the work" (*AE,* 1934, p. 325).

In her last article for the *Journal*, "Learning to See," Mullen writes, "The connecting links between seeing in the sense of perception, of consciousness, and of mind are most clearly and convincingly presented in Professor Dewey's new book *Experience and Nature*" (Mullen, 1926a, p. 10). "Dewey builds those conceptions of consciousness and mind which have revolutionized educational practice and enabled people to understand and enjoy their own experiences in all the activities of life." Applying this idea to art, Mullen makes a pronouncement that reflects what will be another of the major themes of *A as E,* "Art is a record of experience" (p. 11). She concludes, "Education, thus carried out, develops initiative, inventiveness and the

ability of the individual to readapt himself to the constantly changing situation which is life" (pp. 13-14).

*Thomas Munro*

Thomas Munro, another of the Associate Directors of Education, wrote the finest original works of the *Journals.* His first article, "A Constructive Program for Teaching Art," was declared to be "a partial outline of a forthcoming book entitled *Modern Methods in Art Instruction*" (Munro, 1925a, p. 26). He states "The present plan represents a more steadfast adherence to Professor Dewey's principles than either Dow's [Munro said that Dow acknowledged indebtedness to Dewey] or any other system hitherto proposed" (p. 26). Munro addresses his curriculum to correct the "present evils" (p. 26). In *Child and Curriculum* (1902) Dewey had used the same term when he stated that curriculum is harboring "three evils" when subject matter is not "translated into life-terms" (*CC*, Dewey, 1990, p. 202). Munro proposed an application of Dewey's teachings to a direct construction of guidelines for an art education program under nine lettered concepts with fifty-five points. Munro uses Dewey's language and phrases in designing an art-based curriculum. This is just five years before Dewey would give the addresses that became *A as E.* In many respects Munro's proposed application is a projection of Deweyan principles applied directly to the philosophic formation of art-based curriculum.

Munro's nine guidelines and their main concepts can be characterized as:

A. “Education should aim at the harmonious development of native abilities.” “True education is one with growth” that “develops individual character . . . to produce a flexible society . . . in which individuals have equal opportunity to develop their abilities . . . . Education should proceed by doing, by putting ideas into practice, . . . developing interest . . . not merely as a means to and end” but “broadly conceived” to “last the entire lifetime” (Munro, 1925a, p. 26). Here Munro voices Dewey’s desire for a democratic society with equal educational opportunities extended to all children throughout their lives.

B. “Aesthetic growth requires freedom for individual thought and feelings . . . The chief aim of art education should be the development of the individual’s own aesthetic powers” through experiments to organize experiences from spontaneous feelings and personal vision by fostering the play-spirit and “allowing a large amount of freedom for individual action, opinion and preference . . . Persistent and determined effort should be made to avoid” dogmatic rules and “obstruction by other considerations, such as the standardizing of large scale instruction, the imposing of stated tasks for exact marks . . .” (Munro, 1925a, p. 27). If Munro were writing today one could imagine him adding standardized tests to this list of dogmatic obstructions and tasks to be avoided.

He makes suggestions for “gifted or unusual pupils, the potential leaders of art” and says this is “consistent with the ideal of democracy, since it is based upon ability and original nature rather than on birth or wealth” (Munro, 1925a, p. 27).

C. “Aesthetic growth is furthered by genuinely rational control and analysis.” He views “External stimulus” and teachers “directing specific actions” as increasing “intelligent analysis.” Munro supports supervised education and see teachers’ directives as helping students “make their own choices and judgments of value clear, explicit, reasoned and supported by facts” (Munro, 1925a, pp. 29-30).

D. “Artistic and other activities should be mutually correlated.” He views art as “closely bound up with other vital human interests, with religion, philosophy, science and practical affairs . . . All subjects and school activities should be so conducted as to reveal their possible beauty and interests.” Teachers can correlate familiar subjects, arouse interest and “imaginative reconstruction through the medium of art” (Munro, 1925a, pp. 30-32). This correlation fulfills the integration of the core subjects through art activities.

E. “Specific values and interests should be clearly distinguished.” The selection of the essentials to disclose the “value and interest peculiar to each” develops understanding and appreciation in the correlation of interests (Munro, 1925a, p. 32). This concept is central to individualized education.

F. “Sequence of steps in instruction should follow natural growth.” The “function of the teacher is to stimulate” the child’s imagination and develop, enrich and organize “selection, reconstruction and aesthetic appeal” (Munro, 1925a, p. 33). Through a knowledge of and relationship with each individual student the teacher is able to gauge the needs and adjust for the pace of the individual student.

G. “The order should not be rigidly systematic.” Students should be allowed constant growth and continual widening of horizons through the taking in of new material, to develop new powers by “experience, intellect and subtlety” (Munro, 1925a, pp. 35-36). The curriculum must remain flexible to accommodate the interest and ideas that are generated by the student’s own investigations.

H. He offers “The stages in art education” as primary school, high school and college. For the elementary student Munro follows Dewey’s prerequisites from *S & S* and *C & C* prescribing sensory stimuli and experimentation through play. “Little criticism is necessary, since the main purpose here is stimulus to varied activity” (Munro, 1925a, pp. 36-37). He does not speak of the benefits of praise and positive criticism or actually address the possible constraints to a child’s own initiatives that overly negative criticism could create.

I. In offering “practical steps in reform,” Munro makes the obvious observation that to meet his proposed goals would require “considerable reorganization of the public school system” and “would require especially more teachers, with less work and more time for attention to individual pupils.” Munro contends: “The main requisite for intelligent art instruction is not change in the school system, but change in the spirit, aims and methods of individual teachers.” He concludes that to achieve even limited reform that schools must (a) “refrain from tyrannizing over the beliefs and methods of teachers’ and (b) Teacher training must be modified “to impart an appreciation of good art, and a knowledge of scientific

methods in education" (Munro, 1925a, p. 38). In these two points on teacher training the influence of both Barnes and Dewey is obvious: Barnes in discerning what is "good art" and Dewey in applying democratic ideals to allow teacher freedom as well in the coupling of scientific inquiry in art-making.

Although Munro incorporates much of what one would presume to be central to a Deweyan pedagogy he never actually addresses the social interaction of the students and the benefits derived for the individuals in collective art-making. In this omission Munro fails to reach the promise of *A as E* in direct application to teaching and learning.

Munro's second article was directed at higher education: "College Art Instruction: Its Failure and A Remedy." The failure is the remoteness of art from other activities, and the remedy is the "study of every subject to realize its potential aesthetic appeal" (Munro, 1925b, p. 43). Here Munro appears to describe the premise for an integrated art-based curriculum.

In the third *Journal*, October 1925, Munro writes "Franz Cizek and the Free Expression Method" and directs himself back to the issues of children's relationship to art. Munro begins by being favorably impressed with the "congenial" Professor Cizek who stands for exactly what schools need: "more freedom." Munro credits the "Horace Mann and Walden Schools in New York City" with following similar methods. Munro criticized Cizek for not bringing in material and for actually discouraging the students from "visiting the Vienna museums" (Munro, 1925c, p. 37).

Munro ventures no more than "the persistent attempt to shut out influence is sure to have some effect" (p. 39). Munro's conclusion was that Cizek's method worked best with the younger children, but the older children suffered from lack of guidance in their development. He refers the reader to his previous two articles for his proposed message of how reform should be implemented (p. 40).

In the next *Journal*, Dewey speaks of Franz Cizek and his Vienna School of Arts and Crafts in his article "Individuality and Experience." Dewey addresses himself to "the interesting report of Dr. Munro" on "the picture-making employed in the classes of Professor Cizek" with a personal eyewitness perspective, but Dewey never says he was in the school himself. However, Munro said that he went that summer. My reading is that Dewey was on that European trip and could have accompanied Munro, but it seems equally likely Dewey was with Barnes elsewhere. One does get a sense of the first hand observer when Dewey writes "anyone who has seen Cizek's class will testify to the wholesome air of cheerfulness, even of joy, which pervades the room —but gradually tend to become listless and finally bored, while there is an absence of cumulative, progressive development of power and of actual achievement in results" (Dewey, 1926a, p. 1). Dewey states the remedy as being the requirement of teacher directed education that is achieved through "regulation by the ideas, rules, and orders of some one else, who being maturer, better informed and more experienced is supposed to know what should be done and how to do it" (p. 1). Dewey speaks for the importance of curriculum with guided experience

with the analogy of a carpenter who learns through "working with others who have experience and skill, sharing in the simpler portions of the real undertakings, assisting in ways which enable them to observe methods and to see what results they are adapted to accomplish" (p. 2). "There is no inherent opposition between theory and practice; the former enlarges, releases and gives significance to the latter." "Art classes like those of Cizek" which do not endeavor to direct the expression of children and guide them to greater fulfillment Dewey sums up most succinctly as "such a method is really stupid" (p. 4).

This essay is Dewey's most direct statement of the goals and methodology of art based education. "If the teacher is really a teacher, and not just a master of 'authority' he should know enough about his pupils, their needs, experience, degrees of skill and knowledge etc., to be able (not to dictate aims and plans) to share in a discussion regarding what is to be done and be as free to make suggestions as any one else" (Dewey, 1926a, p. 5). Dewey speaks of the process of the instruction: "The real intellectual shaping of the 'end' or purpose comes during and because of the operations subsequently performed" (p. 5). Education is a guided process. "The fuller and richer the experience of the teacher, the more adequate his own knowledge of 'tradition' the more likely is he, given the attitude of participator instead of that of master, to use them in a liberating way" (p. 6). This response to Munro's article on Cizek offers us the clearest insight as to what a guided art curriculum should encompass. Dewey does not mention Cizek in *A as E.*

"The Dow Method and Public School Art" Munro wrote for the fourth *Journal.* "One who looks over the situation in American school art work is constantly impressed with the far-reaching influence of the late Arthur Wesley Dow" (Munro, 1926a, p. 35). "His name has become a rallying cry" for the "advance toward modern methods of instruction." Munro, as Dewey, looks hopefully toward the schools of tomorrow. "A future historian may perhaps look tolerantly on the shortcomings of the early stage in American public school art work" (p. 35). He notes the struggle in "gaining for art any recognition at all in the curriculum beyond conforming to standards where picture-study is often "made a vehicle for patriotic and moral lessons" (p. 35). Munro says for Dow to hope for wide acceptance his methodology would have to be applicable to a system where most teachers are "almost totally untrained either in the technique or appreciation of art" (p. 35). The method would also have to be "capable of easy, standardized application to large classes." Dow elaborated on the methods of Ernest Fenollosa seeking to divide "art into representative and decorative" categories where natural objects are presented as themes for creating new forms instead of using "old copying methods" (p. 36). Dow did "propose instruction in the principles of design or composition," and his "project method" has been expanded to bring art into the curriculum by focusing "greater attention also to the problems of stimulating the interest of children in art work, and correlating it with other phases of their mental growth" (p. 37).

Munro views Dow's method as "a course of plodding synthesis" with a "decided lack of familiarity with psychology of aesthetic creation." He believes that it needs to be reconsidered "in the light of newer psychological tendencies, especially the Deweyan conception of education as natural growth" where the "primary concern of the teacher is to secure vitality and freedom for perception, emotion and imagination" (Munro, 1926a, pp. 38-39). Munro's conclusion is that Dow's system "is foreign in its method to the psychology of all artistic growth and construction" and leaves out organic color, depth, and "important elements in plastic design" that are essential in modern painting. "Yet, for all its inadequacies, it deserves respect as a landmark in American education" (p. 40). Dewey does not respond directly to Munro's article but in the next issue his article "Affective Thought in Logic and Painting" pursues painting as a metaphoric representation of how we learn by writing about painting as a means to explore the "separations between physiological and organic processes" (Dewey, 1926b, p. 3).

Munro's last article in the fifth Journal, "The Art Academies and Modern Education," is a defense of the Barnes Foundation's policy and tendency to refuse admission to the Institute's Gallery to whomever it deems unworthy, especially "large art schools, directed by officials drawn from conservative financial, social and intellectual circles" who "have always opposed radical innovation or departure from accepted standards. Invariably they have opposed the living art of the day, until it has won recognition in spite of them, and then they have employed it as a new orthodoxy,

an additional weapon against any later fresh and spontaneous aesthetic expression" (Munro, 1926b, p. 37). It seems that the Foundation's opposition was not to the collection being seen but to interpretations being promulgated not under their auspices. The defense he offers is, "to inculcate a particular technique is to fix a habit of perception; when this is done, the individual is already an echo of somebody else, and the academic fetters are firmly fastened" (p. 39). Cleary, Munro and Barnes did not see any possible irony to their demand that the collection be viewed from the Foundation's perspective while claiming to be following Dewey's democratic philosophy. They were determined to present the collection to the initiates with the emphasis on the conclusions they intended the initiates to accept. Munro states that academic instruction fails because it "ignores or neglects" that "learning to do is inseparably connected with learning to see." He condemns them for perpetuating the "aesthetic fallacies – that art is imitation" (pp. 40-41).

Munro supports teacher education not just in the arts but in the art of teaching: "a good teacher of art should know something of teaching as well as of art, and be able to see his subject in some of its wider relationships" (1926b, p. 42). Munro's conclusion reflects Dewey's methodology as the foundation of the Institute. "The psychology of learning, the meaning of interest, experiment, reflective analysis, coordination of studies with general development," these are the "conceptions as applied to the problem of making growth in art intelligent and free." Munro says these conceptions are based on the scientific method and psychological insight (p.

42). It is for this reason that "the Foundation is compelled to reserve the privilege of admission to its gallery to students in the courses conducted under its own auspices" (p. 43).

The Foundation's method is ultimately based on directing the viewers' perception. It is a beautiful perspective and one with far reaching applications, and although valid and worthwhile, educationally the method is the opposite of the open dialogue that Dewey proposes. However, if Dewey had believed Barnes's pedagogy was contrary to his own, he would not have served as the Foundation's Educational Director and allowed the writers of the *Journal* to name his work as the cornerstone of the Foundation's philosophy of teaching and learning. The Barnes methodology substantiates Dewey's openness to the guided, teacher driven, curriculum. The learning experience that creates the opportunity for students to apply their intuition through a discussion of what the teacher presents would meet Dewey's expectation for democracy in teaching. In that sense the Foundation's presentation of plasticity, expression, and interpretation seems consistent with aspects of Deweyan principles.

*Laurence Buermeyer*

Buermeyer was the third associate director under Dewey and was also a regular contributor to the *Journal.* His first *Journal* article "The Graphic Sketch Club and Art Education" is a typical Barnsian attack on a Philadelphia art program, declaring it a "fortress of conventionalism" without contribution to "real education."

Buermeyer saw the club representing "not a part of the ideal, but one of the things against which the ideal must struggle to survive" (Buermeyer, 1925a, p. 24).

In the second journal, Buermeyer's "Art and the Ivory Tower" contrasts Benedetto Croce with the "ivory-tower view." The author says art is not defined as technical skills but as "all individual perception of the world and the things about us" (Buermeyer, 1925b, p. 8). Additionally, he expands the definition to a metaphysical pronouncement that we "express ourselves whenever we look at the world" (p. 8). He says that the Crocean view that "the heart of expression is to be found in the immediate experience of apprehending," has "gained a considerable vogue [but that the Crocean view] suffers as much from excessive catholicity as does the traditional view from excessive exclusiveness" (p. 8). He concedes "the Corcean view does bring us closer to realities than the opposed opinion that art is inseparable from craftsmanship." The real purpose of art according to Buermeyer, is "to make human nature intelligible to itself" and that this is what makes the artist "not a purveyor of amusement but a creator of life" (p. 13). Those thoughts and their phrasing sound very much like they could be transposed as passages of *A as E.*

Buermeyer's 1925 view is very much in line with Dewey's main statement about Croce in *A as E*: "Croce has combined the idea of intuition with that of expression. Their identification with each other and of both with art has given readers a good deal of trouble. It can be understood, however, on the basis of his philosophic background, and it affords an excellent instance of what happens when the theorist

superimposes philosophic preconceptions upon an arrested esthetic experience. For Croce is a philosopher who believes that the only real existence is mind, that 'the object does not exist unless it is known, that it is not separable from the knowing spirit'" (*AE,* 1934, p. 294). This seems to be part of Dewey's quotation that Croce will react to in 1948. Buermeyer is one of Dewey's sources for his understanding of Croce's theories applied to aesthetics.

Also in the May issue is Buermeyer's "Art and Day-Dreaming" that is a view of day-dreaming as a withdrawal from the "fundamental brain-work" of art (Buermeyer, 1925c, p. 27). He does concede, "Art and day-dreaming are alike in that they both show us a world nearer to the heart's desire than the actual world" (p. 27). In the following *Journal* "Art as Creative" he declares art is "an expression of emotions" in "an active process" (Buermeyer, 1925d, p. 20). "The passage of emotion to art, in other words, depends upon form: art as a whole is creative by virtue of its selection, transformation, and reorganization of the forms of nature; within art, the process of creation is one of reorganization and enrichment by forms freshly borrowed from nature" (p. 21). The article concludes, "If no creation in art is final, we may find solace in the thought that future artists will not be reduced to a traffic in conventionalities" (p. 27).

Buermeyer's "Pattern and Plastic Form" in the next *Journal* is another Barnes-like attack, this time on Clive Bell's book, *Art* (1914). Buermeyer contends Bell is as "far removed from the truth as were the views which he attacked" and

represents the views "already combated in the columns of this *Journal*" (Buermeyer, 1925d, pp. 26 - 27). He states that an aspect of the Foundation's biological belief is that "education in art is refinement and enrichment of the act of seeing." He held Bell as being "to a large extent responsible for the prevalent confusion between pattern and plastic form" (p. 29). Buermeyer then turns to a blistering condemnation of the critic Roger Fry for "his failure to differentiate between expressive or fully plastic form and decorative form or pattern." He warns that Fry's view will lead to "academicism which promises to become as lifeless and enslaving as the Raphaelesque tradition of prettiness and sentiment" (p. 34). This emphasis on "the act of seeing" (p. 29) is evidence that Buermeyer did not view Barnes's methodology as a form of didacticism set in concrete.

Buermeyer's last article in the *Journal* "Mysticism and Art" discusses "mystical states of mind" as the "expansion of our personality through union with something not ourselves" (Buermeyer, 1926b, p. 28). He defines the "antithesis of mysticism is the sense of isolation, of solitude in an alien and uncomprehending world" (p. 28). False aesthetic mysticism "corresponds to patriotism which is jingoism, the love which is infatuation, the religion which is superstition" (p. 30). That is Buermeyer's only inclusion of the word "religion" in his discussion. He says that art has the "essential quality of mysticism" in that it "directly enlarges our vision" and has a "direct satisfaction of [our] desires" (p. 30).

One is reminded of Dewey's account of his mystical experience in Oil City that like Beurmeyer he equates without a deity or religious dogmatization, but merely as a knowing, "I've never had any doubts since then, nor any beliefs. To me faith means not worrying . . ." (Martin, 2002, p. 49). In *A as E* Dewey reflects his solidarity with Buermeyer's view: "A work of art elicits and accentuates this quality of being a whole and of belonging to the larger, all-inclusive, whole which is the universe in which we live. This fact, I think, is the explanation of that feeling of exquisite intelligibility and clarity we have in the presence of an object that is experienced with esthetic intensity. It explains also the religious feeling that accompanies intense esthetic perception. We are, as it were, introduced into a world beyond this world which is nevertheless the deeper reality of the world in which we live in our ordinary experiences. We are carried out beyond ourselves to find ourselves. I can see no psychological ground for such properties of an experience save that, somehow, the work of art operates to deepen and to raise to great clarity that sense of an enveloping undefined whole that accompanies every normal experience. This whole is then felt as an expansion of ourselves" (*AE,* 1934, p. 195). That could be viewed as Dewey's declaration of the religion of art.

Dewey's only mention of Christianity in *A as E* is in a comparison of scientific explanation of our origins in relation to Christian tradition: "Science has brought with it a radically novel conception of physical nature and of our relation to it. This new conception stands as yet side by side with the conception of the world

and man that is a heritage from the past, especially from that Christian tradition through which the typically European social imagination has been formed" (*AE,* 1934, p. 337).

These articles will be Buermeyer's contributions to the Barnes Press publication of *Art and Education*, 1947, with Dewey as the lead author, and Barnes, Mullen, and Violette de Mazia as the other co-authors. Although Dewey is seldom as direct in any condemnation of other's theories, the views of these writers of the *Journal of The Barnes Foundation* will become very much central to the sentiments and views reflected in *A as E*.

### *Books of the Co-Directors*

All three of Dewey's Associate Directors had published books on aesthetics before Dewey composed the lectures that became *A as E*. Although their *Journal* articles reflect their philosophies, to fully understand the influence of Mullen, Buermeyer and Munro on the formation of Dewey's philosophy I will need to take a cursory review of their main publications. The articles and their planned books were surely discussed as Board members and would have influenced Dewey's developing views on art education.

#### *Laurence Buermeyer*

Laurence Buermeyer' book *The Aesthetic Experience* 1924/1929 states that his "chief obligations are to Dewey and Santayana, as will be apparent to everyone familiar with their writings" (Buermeyer, 1924, p. 15). In his chapter, "The Approach

to Art," Buermeyer credits Dewey with this formula for art: "we perceive something, and we do something; we then perceive something again – the outcome of what we did" (p. 15). Much of the book mirrors Buermeyer's articles and is compatible with *A as E'*s view of the place of aesthetics. "In art as in science no problem can be solved without a clue, and originality consists in the aptitude for finding in experience clues to problems before which the stereotyped mind is helpless" (p. 97). He reflects positively on Croce, "This imaginative understanding, or intuition, as Croce would call it, is now coming to be the chief part of emotional expression" (p. 79). As reflected in his articles he includes an expanded diatribe against day-dreaming and spends much of the book in the chapters, "Art and Morality" and "Art and Religion" (Buermeyer, 1924).

*Mary Mullen*

Mary Mullen's book titled *Approach To Art* is a small publication of the Barnes Foundation Press with just 27 pages and 51 illustrations, all from the collection and printed and bound in the same manner as a *Journal of The Barnes Foundation*. In the introduction she praises Dewey and Barnes. She restates one of the core beliefs that the other writers of the Foundation and Dewey have expressed: "An artist is a person who can express his experience (forms) in a suitable material so that they will arouse similar feeling in the observer" (Mullen, 1923, p. 17). The relationship of the viewer to the art and the artist will be one of the dominant themes of *A as E*. "Art and life are one and the same thing, they cannot be separated" (p. 23).

Mullen's sole contribution to *Art and Education* 1947 is a reprinting of her journal article, "Learning to See," but the title was changed to "Problems Encountered in Art Education" (Dewey, 1947, p. 253).

*Thomas Munro*

Munro's article in the first journal was "a partial outline for a forthcoming book that was to be titled *Modern Methods in Art Instruction"* (Munro, 1925a, p. 26). The book never materialized, although he published over a dozen other books. His next publication, *Scientific Method in Aesthetics,* 1928, is his most relevant writing before Dewey forms the *A as E* lectures, but it is not directed toward art-making or the art maker but is a study of aesthetics and criticism. The main premise of the book is that Aesthetic is "a branch of speculative philosophy" (Munro, 1928, p. 15) that incorporates the experimental attitude as in science: "It is impossible to over-estimate the importance to aesthetics of direct, spontaneous and not too narrowly controlled experience of works of art" (p. 26). Much of the book is about the nature of criticism and appreciation. Munro states that the "chief danger" is the "tendency to pigeon-hole" and not involve an "experimental attitude" that requires a "suspension of judgment" (Munro, 1928).

The work of Thomas Munro was not included in the Barnes Foundation's *Art and Education.* Instead he published his own collection of twenty-six articles in *Art Education* in 1956. Chapter XII of Munro's book is "Franz Cizek and the Free Expression Method" reprinted from the *Journal*. Apparently his view of Cizek had

not changed in thirty years nor had he any additional points he wished to make. His article on the Dow Method from the January 1926 *Journal of The Barnes Foundation* is reprinted with the title of "Artistic Development and Logical Synthesis."

Munro's *Art Education* is a collection of articles he published in various periodicals between the first *Barnes Journal* article in 1925 and an article in *The Bulletin of the University of Georgia* in 1953. The only article original to the book, "Aesthetic Education as a Part of General Education," credits Dewey as furthering the democratic emphasis on freedom in art begun by Rousseau and the belief "that the child should be encouraged to feel, think, observe, discuss, and experience for himself throughout the educational process" (Munro, 1956, p. 14).

### The Barnes Foundation: Journal of the Art Department *(1970-73)*

Forty-four years after the *Journal of The Barnes Foundation* was discontinued, the Foundation began publishing *The Barnes Foundation: Journal of the Art Department* in the spring of 1970 and continued publishing a spring and autumn issue until 1973. Two articles of the re-established *Journal* have relevance to our study. In "The Barnes Foundation and the Threat of Cultural Entropy" Gilbert M. Cantor holds that the publications of the Foundation place "considerable emphasis on the fortunate and creative relationship of Barnes and Dewey, particularly in the realm of educational theory and method" (Cantor, 1973, p. 23). Acknowledging that other writers besides Barnes and Dewey were defining the Foundation's methodology, he goes on to say that the Foundation is carrying on "a particular tradition in the

philosophy of culture" (p. 24). In the Autumn'72 issue, James Johnson Sweeney offers a personal testimony to the person of Barnes of whom he confesses he "has heard very few kind words said and have read very few written" (Sweeny, 1972, p. 22). He tells of meeting Barnes on a ship to Europe in 1925 at a benefit at which all attendees were dressed in evening clothes and Barnes was "wearing linen golf knickers and a tweed jacket" (p. 22). He remembers Barnes telling him "John Dewey had taught him what is involved in educating people to new ways of thinking" (p. 28). He accounts that Barnes began his "annual pilgrimages" to Europe in 1912 and purchased a Renoir that year for $20,000 (p. 31). Sweeny states Barnes's belief succinctly as "abstract art could only be a lower order of creation –mere decoration" (p. 35). He also gives a date to Barnes's dismissal of Picasso as "he apparently had a strange blockage towards products of the cubist movement and no interest whatsoever in Picasso's work after 1914" (p. 36). "It is Barnes' philosophical outlook, related as it is to Dewey's, which has opened up these wide horizons to all of us through the Collection" so that "it could be studied systematically in accordance with Dewey's educational principles" (p. 36). He concludes, "And obdurate as Barnes seemed at certain times in his preferences, it is interesting to recall how flexible, modest, and tacitly self-critical he could be at others" (p. 36).

### Art News*: Assessing What Barnes Bought*

In October 2005, *ArtNews* published an article on the controversy that continues to haunt the foundation. The article, "Assessing What Barnes Bought," has

the sub-heading: “A team of top art scholars takes a close look at attributions in the famed collection –and comes up with some significant changes.” The article reports that a recent and comprehensive assessment of the collection by 39 specialists. It has resulted in 22 Old Master paintings, formerly attributed to Titian, Giorgione, Rubens, Tintoretto, and Veronese, being downgraded to being works by the schools of . . . Works formerly presented as by El Greco and a Hieronymus Bosch have been assessed to be copies. The Barnes administrative director says there are approximately 9,000 objects in the collection (Failing, 2005, p. 68). The collection never had a registrar, a conservator, or an archivist. The question is: since “Barnes himself was a fastidious record-keeper, why was documentation of the collection so neglected?” (p. 69). The Foundation refers to the allegations that the institution was and is opposed to reproductions of the collection as an “urban myth” that grew in the nine years after Barnes’s death when the institution was all but closed until forced by lawsuit in 1960 to open its doors to the public.

Barnes was noted for denying access to the collection, especially to those he deemed to be “art elitists.” Questions of the Foundation’s policies on limiting access to the collection and that policy’s relationship to the possibility that the collection contains forgeries, fakes, copies or elevated claims of authorship and whether this was due to naivety, chutzpah, chicanery, or conniving remain undetermined.

“Today the gallery is open three days a week, and attendance is capped at 400 visitors per day” (Failing, 2005, p. 68). Legal entanglements persist and the

cataloguing of the collection continues with no set date for a conclusion. Speculation also continues on what their ultimate determination will conclude, although all concur that the collection is one of the finest private holdings in the world and houses an amazing array of masterworks.

In the third edition of, *The Art in Painting* (1937), Barnes added a section to his chapter "The Problem of Appreciation" that is the basis of his education methodology: "We perceive only what we have learned to look for, both in life and art . . . The experience of the artist arises out of a particular background, a set of interests and habits of perception, which, like the scientist's habits of thought, are potentially sharable by other individuals . . . What has made the study of science valuable and fruitful is method, and without a corresponding method of learning to see the study of art can lead only to futility" (Barnes, 1937, p. 7). Part of Barnes's method was the "removal of old habits and the learning of new ones" through the recognition that "seeing is an active process" (Glass, 1997, p. 92). Because the institute was working with adults through the medium of their collection "seeing" replaced "doing" as the means of establishing experience. Dewey stated this in *A as E* as "to perceive, a beholder must *create* his own experience" (*AE,* 1934, p. 54).

The problem of the Foundation's claim that its educational methodology is based on Dewey's philosophy is that it "seems to conflict with the basic thrust toward democratic openness that runs through all of Dewey's thought" (Glass, 1997, p. 96).

If the Foundation's views are examined in consideration of the reassessment of the collection, alternate justifications for the policies can be poised.

Barnes thought that by not displaying the titles, dates and artists or cataloguing the work, he was removing distractions that might hinder the "viewers' developing an appreciation of the works themselves" and thereby force the viewer into "a new way of seeing art" (Glass, 1997, p. 97). His "wall units" consisted of an arrangement of paintings to show the development of particular aspects of plasticity that an individual painter "borrowed from other traditions" (p. 97). The Foundation's opposition to color reproduction and their policy of not lending paintings to other institutions was aimed at controlling the viewer's initial experience so that it would be revelatory in the heightened perception of seeing the work for the first time as something new. This could be supported by Dewey's emphasis upon the transformational quality of initial experiences and how those experiences then become aesthetic events. However, the Foundation's policies stand in opposition to Dewey's advocacy of transparency, academic freedom and open dialogue to discover and create new ideas and approaches to problem solving. Barnes's insistence upon "seeing it as he saw it" could be viewed as a rigid close-minded and dogmatic approach that was itself a vestige of another canonized tradition. Barnes's personal view and ideas, "character and temperament have had a significant effect on the current philosophy of the Foundation" (Glass, 1997, p. 100). "From a Deweyan

perspective, this rigidity in content is such a serious flaw that it vitiates any claim that the Foundation exemplifies Dewey's philosophy" (p. 101).

"The Barnes Foundation can be seen as a determined and single-minded attempt at pursuing a brilliant ideal, but it cannot be seen as an exemplification of John Dewey's philosophy of education" (Glass, 1997, p. 103). The Foundation's "inflexible approach to teaching" is in direct opposition to Dewey's main pedagogical premise: "to be a dogmatic Deweyan is a contradiction in terms" (p. 103).

Four of the Foundation's policies: (a) not supplying information about the paintings, (b) allowing reproductions only as they chose, (c) not lending the paintings to other institutions and (d) refusing admission to academics they considered elitist could be viewed as protective strategies to avoid scrutiny of the work beyond the Foundation's control, purposes, determination and presentation. An absence of color reproductions meant there could be no basis for comparison to original works. Title lists, attributed dates of authorship, and artists' registries could not be compared. Only a select audience could view the work. In light of a potential scandal the policies could be viewed as protectionist. Those means and methods of control of the paintings are all prerequisites to the selected seclusion of the body of work from a collective eye. The policies are also a requirement for an exclusive experience where unseen paintings by the masters are arranged to show a progression in "plasticity" and a progression in "a way of seeing." The collection of masterworks was intended to form a vision for experiencing the nature of art, the progression of not just techniques

but of ways of physically, biologically, seeing. The wall-units were also a view of history. A progression of thought through time was presented dating back to ancient African sculpture and masterworks of Acoma Pueblo and Navaho pottery through the Titians and Tintorettos to Cezanne, Renoir, and Matisse.

The relationship of the experience of the wall unit and shared ideas of the guides and other viewers could, in a single afternoon visit to the galleries, alter one's own aesthetic definitions and perceptions for a lifetime. The Barnes Foundation continues with hauntings of Barnes's booming voice echoing through the chambers declaring his unmalleable vision of plasticity. Dewey's story of *A as E* could not be told without him. For all his cantankerousness Albert Barnes was John Dewey's closest friend and compatriot. Whatever the compromises for Dewey, the gifts from Barnes's extraordinary vision remain at the very heart and mind of Dewey's philosophy of art education so graciously imbued, created, and related in *A as E* with little dogma.

# CHAPTER VI:

# CONSIDERATIONS BY OTHERS: REVIEWS 1934 – 1952, CROCE, AND THE DEWEY SYMPOSIUM OF 1989

This chapter will explore the critical reception of *A as E* with a sample of reviews printed within two years of its publication. In 1948 the Italian philosopher Benedetto Croce took exception to *A as E'* s interpretation of his philosophy in a contemptuous article that Dewey responded to in *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism,* creating a debate that continued until both men died within six months of each other. Their "conversation" offers valuable insight into Dewey's view of *how we learn.* In 1989 the University of Illinois sponsored a "Symposium on John Dewey's *Art as Experience*" which offers perspective on Dewey's thoughts about the relationship of art and education. This chapter will examine these forces and strive to form an understanding on their influence on children and their art-making.

## *Reviews and Commentary on* A as E *at the Time of Its Publication 1934 & 1935*

Dewey's significance in the fields of both philosophy and education is substantiated by the numerous reviews of *A as E* published in newspapers and journals in 1934 and 1935. Most of the reviewers acknowledge the revered place Dewey held as a philosopher. The reviews are generally favorable and offer insight into our relationship with art. They also point to the difficulty of reading the book due to Dewey's writing style. Many of the reviews string together a variety of quotations from *A as E* without contributing clarity to the book's dominant themes. The reviews

that find the book genuinely revelatory are perhaps, balanced by the number of reviews that seem unwilling to commit to any definitive pronouncement. Rarely does a review recommend reading *A as E*.

The first two reviews of the book are from what still are two of nation's leading newspapers, *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post.* On April 8, 1934, Dino Ferrari wrote in the *NYT's* "Professor Dewey's name is so well known that any introduction to the readers of this review would be superfluous" (Ferrari, 1934, p. B2). He says that Dewey is universally recognized as the "Columbia University sage" and "the Philosopher of the North American Continent" (p. B2). Dewey is declared to be the "most representative voice of the American philosophic consciousness" and *A as E* is deemed to be more than a strictly formal treatise on aesthetics. Ferrari defines *A as E* as a declaration of art as the living embodiment of experience. Ferrari takes exception with what he interprets as Dewey's assertion "that all men are artists, or at least potentially so" (p. B2). Whether we maintain our nature as artists into adulthood or not, Dewey's contention of our artistic nature is true, at least in our childhoods. Dewey argues in *S & S* that children have an instinct to use pencil and paper and an impulse to express themselves, to come into consciousness (*SS*, Dewey, 1990, p. 40).

Ferrari's review characterizes Dewey as pointing "the finger of shame at the crass materialism that warps the natural esthetic impulses of man into corrupt

activities for the sole purpose of gain." He finds this view of Dewey's ironic "since the book is dedicated to that very eccentric and autocratic founder of the Barnes Foundation —and so called purveyors of art" (Ferrari, 1934, p. B2). But his concluding thought is that "Dewey in this book has very likely argued the most thorough-going, stimulating, sprightly brief for the 'biological' side of art that we know of. His *Art as Experience* will no doubt stand as a tribute to his alert mind, keen perception and vigorous pen" (p. B2).

*The Washington Post's* reviewer, Karl Schriftgiesser, casts *Art as Experience* as "a summary and reaffirmation of the major philosophical treatises held by the famous professor," but holds that it is "more than a recapitulation of what he has said and preached over many years" (Schriftgiesser, 1934, p. B5). The reviewer recognizes Dewey as "perhaps our greatest philosopher and certainly the most potent force in American education" (p. B5). On style he notes, "Dr. Dewey has, until this book, been one of the most obtuse stylists we have," but he finds that *A as E* reveals Dewey "as a writer of insight (which he always was) and clarity (which he has too seldom been)" (p. B5).

The review sums up the educational application of *A as E* as "reality exists only in experiences and that knowledge" comes from "actual operations in relation to the world of one's own experience" (Schriftgiesser, 1934, p. B5). Schriftgiesser sees Dewey as defining thought as "an instrument of behavior rather than a means of

gaining knowledge." He says in his recent visit to the Corcoran Gallery that Dewey's definition of abstract art was applicable. The reviewer concludes that the book is "the most modern and intelligent work of its type that has come forth recently," and although "it is not easy reading" it is "an adventure in intellectualism that will exhilarate any one who has been seeking a modern and usable apologia for art" (p. B5).

The *American Library Association's* reviewer in its concise posting labels *A as E* a "philosophical and argumentative treatise" with the observation, "Rather difficult reading" (Anonymous, 1934, p. 272). Irwin Edman, the reviewer for *The Journal of Philosophy* regards the book as an analysis of art in connection to "the esthetic with other human interests" that "breaks down the barriers" between art and "the rest of experience" (Edman, 1934, p. 275).

*A as E* is declared to be of "special significance" both on the "appreciative and creative side, as a liberation, organization, and integration of experience" in creating an understanding of art in "the context of 'criticism' and 'civilization'" (Edman, 1934, p. 275). The *Christian Century's* writer, Edwin T. Buehrer, posted his review as "An Open Letter to John Dewey" noting that for Dewey art was "rooted firmly in nature, not as a gift of a Supernatural Being, but as an expression of man's own intellectual and emotional outreach" (Buehrer, 1934, p. 153). Buehrer concludes that Dewey's treatment of *A as E* "is on the borderline of religion" as art "takes its

place with science in recreating our social attitudes, and in generating a new respect for experience" (p. 153). Ernest Sutherland Bates in his review for *The American Mercury* saw Dewey rooting art in "normal life rather than" in the "ethereal or mystical" (Bates, 1934, p. 253), concluding that "the essence of consciousness is imagination, not logic." Art becomes the "supreme expression" of the imagination (p. 254). This review recognizes *A as E* as determining that art "has a social function of sharpening the perception and educating the imagination" (p. 254).

Kenneth Burke's review "The Esthetic Strain" in the *New Republic* states that Dewey "clearly shows how concepts carried over from philosophy can pervert our understanding of art" (Burke, 1934, p. 315). "Art is not 'illusory,' since it does actually embody its insight in external objects" (p. 316). "He seems to feel that these disorders are transitional rather than absolute." (p. 316). Burke concludes, "I think, that however broad or deep-lying the issue may be, there is no turning back: science is with us, we must accept it and shape it to esthetic ends" (p. 316). A review in the *Nation* by Robert J. Goldwater, determined that "inconclusiveness arises further from the fact that Dewey nowhere indicates explicitly the psychology that underlies his whole analysis" (Goldwater, 1934, p. 158). "Without it, we are left with perhaps just what Professor Dewey wished to give us, a provocative and illuminating but inconclusive discussion of the art" (p. 711).

The reviewer, Listowel, in the *Burlington* identifies Dewey as the "distinguished pragmatist" whose "grasp of the issue has true philosophical breadth" (Listowel, 1935, p. 148). "The originality of this work, at a moment when the customary philosophical approach is either psychological, sociological, or objective, is that its angle of vision is frankly biological; for aesthetic experience is regarded as a specific reaction of the human organism to its environment" (p. 148). Listowel concludes that despite this "original biological approach . . . the total impression left by this book is one of disappointment" (p. 148). "Professor Dewey has not escaped the snare, into which so many aestheticians fall, of excessive concentration on a single art . . . in this case painting overshadows" (p. 148). The *Burlington* reviewer finds "another defect is, however, far more serious. There is no indication that the author is acquainted with a single French or German authority of the present century, though these two nationalities have contributed most to the progress of modern aesthetics" (pp. 148 -149). Listowel concludes, "How can philosophy advance while philosophers wallow in a parochial ignorance long since discarded by scientists?" (p. 149).

David Wight Prall writes for the *Philosophical Review* and takes from Dewey that "artistic expression is a natural phenomenon" and that the "only case for perfect communication . . . is artistic expression" (Prall, 1935, p. 389). The reviewer declares that Dewey must expose the "philosophic blundering that would separate the intellectual from the aesthetic" and "remove the ulcerous growth of traditional ethics"

in order to "turn to an account of just art" (p. 389). Prall speaks of "Dewey's eloquence," and "astonishing freshness of interest and flexibility of mind" (p. 389). He credits Dewey with an "important philosophical achievement" and declares the "actual accomplishment as extraordinary" (p. 390). "In unambiguous, honest English *Art as Experience* has given a penetrating and perspicacious account of the aesthetic, or, if we must bring in this redundancy to be true to our author, of our experience of the aesthetic" (p. 390).

The 1935 *Educational Administration & Supervision: Including Teacher Training* review by H.Gordon Hullfish declares *A as E* as an important volume with "a special significance for education" (Hullfish, 1935, p. 235). He credits Dewey with suggesting a "view for the reorganization of education" through "unified experiences" that "reaches far beyond the realm of formal education" (p. 235). "Dynamic in quality, it provides many facets from which the further reconstruction of experiences may be explored" (p. 236).

The last two reviews are from England. *The Times Literary Supplement* says "His argument is apt to be diffuse and, no doubt because it originally appeared in the form of lectures, its direction is not always clear and continuous. But it is certainly a thoughtful book" (Anonymous, 1935, p. 35). The *Spectator* in a review by Wyndham Lewis titled "Art as Life" says "Dr. John Dewey is a man no one can fail to respect and admire, however much the doctrines to which he adheres may be considered

unsound. He is as typical of America as is Negro Jazz, yes: but his heart is in the right place, even if his head is all astray" (Lewis, 1934, p. 6). Lewis determines Dewey's theories have all "the faults of the crude American materialism" (p. 6). He takes exception to Dewey's style and view; "This language means, if it means anything, that Time is the magician." An exasperated Lewis declares, "the manifestations of pantheistic improvement" through "the ascent of man" is "a delusion" when you consider the "retrograde state of the world" (p. 8). Lewis groups Dewey in with "dogmatic naturalists" and says he is "not a philosopher in whom we can much believe: though in the case of Dr. Dewey there are, as I started by saying, many observations by the way which are worthy of attention" (p. 8).

The reviews of 1934 and 1935 offer insight into the reception of *A as E* at the time of its debut. The reviewers also offer an understanding of how revered Dewey was within the intellectual community. However, it is a review from Benedetto Croce and Dewey's response to that criticism that offers the most revealing insight from Dewey on both his original intention in *A as E* as well as his views on the meaning of intuition.

### *Croce and Dewey*

The following passage becomes a point of contention that plays out for Croce and Dewey and defines both men's views on the place of intuition. Croce creates an

argument in which Dewey defines his purposes and intent in *A as E*. The commentary between them does not end until both philosophers are dead:

The term 'intuition' is one of the most ambiguous in the whole range of thought. In the theories just considered, it is supposed to have essence as its proper object. Croce has combined the idea of intuition with that of expression. Their identification with each other and of both with art has given readers a good deal of trouble. It can be understood, however, on the basis of his background, and it affords an excellent instance of what happens when the theorist superimposes philosophic preconceptions upon an arrested esthetic experience. For Croce is a philosopher who believes that the only real existence is mind, that 'the object does not exist unless it is known, that it is not separable from the knowing spirit.' In ordinary perception, objects are taken as if they were external to mind. Therefore, awareness of objects of art and of natural beauty is not a case of perception, but of an intuition that knows objects as, themselves, states of mind. 'What we admire in a work of art is the perfect imaginative form in which a state of mind has clothed itself.' 'Intuitions are truly such because they represent feelings.' Hence the state of mind that constitutes a work of art is expression as a manifestation of a state of mind, and is intuition as knowledge of a state of mind. I do not refer to the theory for the purpose of refutation but as indication of the extreme to which philosophy may go in superimposing a preconceived theory upon esthetic experience, resulting in arbitrary distortion (*AE*, Dewey, 1934, pp. 294-295).

Benedetto Croce responded to *A as E* in *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* in March of 1948, fourteen years after the book's publication. Croce began by declaring that "Dewey's aesthetics are scarcely known at all in Italy" and that Dewey continues "to reject and repel, one may almost say with horror, the philosophy commonly called 'idealistic'" (Croce, 1948, p. 203). Croce takes exception with Dewey's credited influences as being from his readings "somewhat in French and still less in German" (*AE,* 1934, p. vii). Croce notes, "Dewey expressly mentions my studies more than once in the course of his argument" but does not mention the debt he owed to Italian philosophers (1948, p. 203). "Even so, an Italian reader is pleasantly surprised to meet on every page observations and theories long since formulated in Italy and familiar to him" (p. 203). He then cites a long list of examples of Dewey's unacknowledged Italian debt, but allows himself to say that Dewey rehashes the ideas of others with a "freshness and spontaneity and sustains the reader's interest; particularly the interest of one who, having arrived earlier and by other routes at the same conclusions, and discovering his own ideas in a new form, finds in this an added proof of their truth" (p. 204). He accuses Dewey of trying "to pass off a question of ideas as a question of vocabulary," and that "the criticism he brings against idealistic aesthetics are without foundation" (p. 205). Croce's main observation is, "It is certainly strange that a mind so keen and a genius so acute as Dewey's should turn in such vicious circles and positivistic tautologies; and I often ask myself how it could have happened" (pp. 206- 207).

Clearly by a preconceived design *The Journal of Aesthetics & Art Criticism* followed Croce's review by offering Dewey the opportunity to respond to Croce's criticism. Dewey's response is titled: "A Comment on the Foregoing Criticisms." Dewey begins by thanking Croce for his attention and "his heroic resistance to the wave of Fascism which swept so many Italian thinkers and educators off their feet" (Dewey, 1948, p. 207). Dewey passes on a reply and chooses to offer a comment instead. "For a reply, as I understand the word, requires a common ground on which both parties stand and from which deviations and departures can be measured. I do not find such a common ground in this present case" (p. 207). He states that Croce assumes his intention was to write about art with "the intention of bringing it within the scope of pragmatic philosophy" but "The actual fact is that I have consistently treated the pragmatic theory as a theory of knowing and as confined within the limits of the field of specifically cognitive subject-matter" (p. 207). Dewey states that he rejects aesthetic subject-matter as a form "of knowledge of Reality, presumably of a higher and truer order than anything of which 'science' is capable." His goal was to "make it over until it seemed to fit into the categories of some preferred philosophy" and that his effort "was reasonably satisfactory to some critics who engage in the practice of art" (p. 208). Dewey says it directly: "Knowing is an activity of human beings as living beings" and it is "a legitimate question to ask which one of the two, science or art, owes the most to the other" as "the aesthetic phase of life-experience plays a highly important part in attaining the conclusions reached in science" (p. 208).

Dewey dismisses Croce's nationalist concern as "a kind of xenophobia with respect to Italian writers in particular" saying that he owes more to Barnes "than to all the *official* treatises on art composed by philosophers." Dewey says that if Croce read Barnes he would find "an insistence on the importance of continuity of tradition in *production* of works of art, as well as of critical appreciation of them" (p. 209). Dewey cites Barnes as his "source of instruction with respect to all the arts" and that *A as E* is "an echo of what is to be found in what Dr. Barnes has said about the plastic arts" (p. 209).

*The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* published "A Comment on Croce's and Dewey's Aesthetics" by Patrick Romanell twenty-one months later. Romenall declares Croce's critique and Dewey's commentary a stimulating exchange by "two of the most distinguished philosophers of today." He breaks their argument down to Croce fitting art into "a preconceived system of philosophy" and Dewey's analysis of art as being "in its own language" (Romanell, 1949, p. 12). Romanell all but dismisses Croce's "logic of distincts" as being "incompatible with his 'idealistic aesthetics'" (p. 126). Then Romanell brings Dewey's *Common Faith* (1934) into his review and says Dewey's "mode of approach" to the "aesthetic experience" and the "religious experience" clearly overlap, but that a comparison of "Dewey's philosophy of art with his philosophy of religion would immediately reveal that he is more anti-church than he is anti-museum" (p. 128).

Romanell believes the confusion that arises in *A as E* is from Dewey's attempt to fuse the inconsistency between the polar opposites of "the idea of art as a special type of experience and the idea of art as a special phase of it" (1949, p. 128). Still he views Dewey as a "great reformer by nature and nurture." He says he does not "doubt the far-reaching significance, both theoretical and practical, of his emancipation proclamation announced in *Art as Experience"* (p. 128).

In the same publication Benedetto Croce responds three years later, just two months before his death, with "Dewey's Aesthetics and the Theory of Knowledge." Croce sends his "reverent greetings" to Dewey, apparently unaware Dewey had died three months earlier (Croce, 1952, p. 1). Croce clearly seeks to establish the "common ground" Dewey had denied him in his reply to Croce's last article. He acknowledges that Dewey has begun "to be recognized just recently in Italy" and offers as proof of his previous claim that De Ruggiero in his *Reconstruction in Philosophy* also saw *A as E* arriving "at the same conclusions regarding art which had been reached in Italian aesthetics during the preceding thirty years" (p. 2). Croce says he finds Dewey's assertion that they have no common ground to be unallowable as "we are both standing on the grounds of philosophy, which we have both studied and loved" though in contrast (p. 3). His argument could be condensed to his assertion that *A as E* speaks to "the unity of intuition and expression" but because Dewey "preserves a dualism" he "is incapable of thinking intuition to be in the very act of expression, the will to be action" (p. 5). Croce quotes himself from his *History,*

*Chronicles, and False Histories*, 1912, "History is only that which is born from a present interest that reanimates and revivifies the past, and that without this stimulus, the past remains a heap of disconnected and extrinsic data, . . . every true history is not 'of the past,' but is 'contemporary'" (p. 4). In the quotation from *A as E* that had promoted these exchanges Dewey had characterized Croce as wishing "to subordinate creation of art and aesthetic enjoyment to a preconceived system of philosophy" (*AE,* 1934, p. 294). Croce says that he thought he was dreaming "to see me accused of the very opposite of what I have always affirmed and in every instance stoutly and acrimoniously defended" (Croce, 1952, p. 6). In an attempt to rise above the fray Croce has the last word, restating his objection and noting his respect, "Notwithstanding how much I have been saying here for reasons of loyalty toward what I believe to be true, I shall always continue to admire and to feel grateful for the many truths, highly, even if sometimes unconsciously, speculative, which Dewey has defined and inculcated in his books and which he candidly believes to be the fruit of his empiricism and pragmatism, but which in reality are due solely to the genial insight with which nature has endowed him" (p. 6).

What Croce truly found objectionable was Dewey's use of the word "intuition" in *A as E* and Dewey's portrayal of him as: "the theorist superimposes philosophic preconceptions upon an arrested esthetic experience" (*AE,* 1934, p. 294). Dewey's assertion is that "the state of mind that constitutes a work of art is expression as a manifestation of a state of mind, and is intuition as knowledge of a

state of mind" (p. 295), coupled with his characterization of Croce as superimposing his own views that create "arbitrary distortion[s]" (p. 295) is what Croce is unable to let pass without stating his objection. At the heart of the contention with Croce is Dewey's most direct pronouncement of the place of philosophy as an art form: "For philosophy like art moves in the medium of imaginative mind, and, since art is the most direct and complete manifestation there is of experience *as* experience, it provides a unique control for the imaginative ventures of philosophy" (p. 297).

The relevance of this quotation of Dewey to children is that their art-making is the first palpable expression of their philosophic conceptions; a child's art is a separate and unique means of knowing. Dewey ends *A as E*, chapter XII, "The Challenge to Philosophy" with: "Of art as experience it is also true that nature has neither subjective nor objective being; is neither individual nor universal, sensuous nor rational. The significance of art as experience is, therefore, incomparable for the adventure of philosophic thought" (*AE*, 1934, p. 297).

Although Croce is cited in the index of *A as E* twice, the passage referring to him on pages 294 and 295, the passage that prompts Croce's rebuttal, is not listed in the index. Dewey's passage ends: "I do not refer to the theory for the purpose of refutation but as indication of the extreme to which philosophy may go in superimposing a preconceived theory upon esthetic experience, resulting in arbitrary distortion" (*AE*, 1934, p. 295). I believe Croce took that clarification as a direct

broadside. It is surely one of the most direct attacks on the views of any individual in the whole of *A as E*; from kind-hearted Dewey it is razor sharp.

In 1970 George H. Douglas wrote an excellent essay "A Reconsideration of the Dewey-Croce Exchange" that was also published in *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism.* His insights into the dialogue of Dewey and Croce brings us back to the essential development of the inner workings of the mind and is most applicable to children, their art-making and how we learn. Douglas sets out to analyze the divide between "Croce and Dewey and determine whether, as Dewey believed, they cannot be reconciled, or whether, as Croce evidently thought, they ought to be" (Douglas, 1970, p. 497). Croce and Dewey's dispute over pragmatism, idealism, Hegelian theory and Croce's anger over Dewey's "lack of avowed indebtedness" to Italian writers is inconsequential to *A as E's* view of art and education. What is of consequence is Croce's doctrine of intuition and how it can be viewed in light of *A as E*. Douglas states that Croce's doctrine is troublesome due to the ambiguity of the concept of intuition, especially when combined with the idea of expression. This mirrors Dewey's assertions that "the term 'intuition' is one of the most ambiguous in the whole range of thought" and "Croce has combined the idea of intuition with that of expression" (*AE,* 1934, p. 294). Douglas contends, "Croce's theory defines works of art in terms of 'states of mind' rather than in terms of perception" (Douglas, p. 498). Croce believes "the only real existence is mind" and that "the object does not

exist unless it is known." Therefore, this makes artistic expression a manifestation of "intuition as knowledge of a state of mind" (p. 498).

Douglas interprets Dewey as having a "stereotyped attitude toward Croce" as a Hegelian and on this "Dewey is obviously mistaken if not wrongheaded, and Croce is quite within his rights to set him straight" (Douglas, 1970, p. 498). It was Dewey that provoked Croce by including him in *A as E* in a manner that Croce considered a misrepresentation of his views. Douglas says "Dewey had a weak and confused grasp of Crocean theory of art" and that "Dewey's education in aesthetic and critical theories is an eccentric one, admitting of all sorts of oddities and dark spots" (p. 499). He suggests that Croce thinks Dewey came to his views in a "surreptitious way," but Dewey's failure to credit Italian writers should not have railed Croce to such an extent. Instead of taking such offense to Dewey's exclusion of the Italians Croce should have been satisfied that Dewey's ideas were "harmonious with his own theories in a number of areas" (p. 499). Dewey should likewise have seen the common sympathy and "dissolved some of the petty differences" and recognized the "broad area of agreement he had with Croce" (p. 500). They both viewed art "as the key to the understanding of human experience," and as the "very foundation of human life" that is "never easily separable" from the human experience (p. 500). The language that Dewey and Croce use is different as "we do not find in Croce the biological perspective of Dewey," nor do we find in Dewey "the development of human experience by means of intuitions," on which Croce defines his philosophy.

But both agree "aesthetic dimensions to experience gives to human life its color and texture" (p. 500). "Expressive activity focuses the scattered rays of reality, [and] gives meaning to the chaos of animal life" (p. 501).

Douglas contends that it is "not easy to understand why Dewey should be so troubled by the use of the term *intuition* and by its equation with expression" (Douglas, 1970, p. 501). "*Intuition* for Croce is the process whereby man first forms his materials into a knowledge of the individual" (p. 501). Intuition is the process by which "primal activity of our spiritual being . . . emerges into full and individual concreteness." Every intuition "is a transformation of a subjective impression into an objective image" that is obtained "by making, forming [and] expressing" (p. 501). "The philosophy of intuition is thus at one and the same time the philosophy of expression" (p. 501). The processes of expression and of intuition are acts of the imagination.

Croce's intuition employs the theory of knowledge as "an act of self-discovery or development. Intuition transforms impressions into completed images; externalization is not required. Croce's intuition is an act of making, or in Dewey's terminology, an experience" (Douglas, 1970, p. 502). For Dewey and Croce "aesthetic experience apprehends the object's immanent meanings." This conception of learning has far reaching implications in our formation of curriculum for young learners. Douglas concludes: "Dewey was more interested in the biological continuity

of art and life while Croce was more interested in the continuity of art with culture in the historical sense" (p. 503). "Both wanted to think of the genius of the artist as being a kind of fulfillment or culmination of the experience shared by all mankind, not a special or privileged experience" (p. 503).

### *Symposium on Dewey 1989*

*The Journal of Aesthetic Education* published three brief reflections on the Southern Illinois University's 1989 "Symposium on John Dewey's *Art as Experience*." The initial conclusion the participants came to was that "missing from this symposium is an invited contribution devoted more specifically to the educational implications of Dewey's aesthetics and the uses to which it is currently being put" (Shusterman, 1989, pp. 49 -50). They determined one of the reasons is that Dewey treats concepts in *A as E* "in such an intertwining dialectical manner that readers are often left wondering how they are to be understood" (p. 50). One of the reasons offered is that Dewey "vacillates between the notion of art as a quality" of experience and "the more traditional view that works of art are those objects exhibited in museums" (p. 50). They determine that *A as E* has "been largely ignored by philosophers since mid-century" but "may now be undergoing a reexamination" as Dewey's "home-grown version of a critical theory" may meet "the needs of today's philosophy better than do the French imports that are all the rage in American intellectual circles" (p. 49).

One of the conclusions of the participants of the symposium is that Dewey is saying that he "cannot differentiate between aesthetics and religion, aesthetics and science, aesthetics and crafts or utilitarian arts," that he is "removing the separations and trying to show how there is a common substance" (Burnett, 1989, p. 51). The members of the symposium came to this exciting conclusion: *A as E* shows a vast potential as the basis for a unified education endeavor centered on the art experience and expression. When applied to the formation of children's curriculum the recognition of the art instinct and an approach to pedagogy based on a child's interests in creating and exploring offers the opportunity for enriching and uniting all our curriculum goals. "When new challenges cause us to shift perspective, we can see that what was *an* experience in any one of several domains can now 'pass out of and into' other domains" (p. 53). Although the symposium's participants are not able to name a more "comprehensive work on aesthetics in English" they cannot account for the lack of recognition and disinterest in *A as E* nor why it has not generated "sweeping new insights, at least some enthusiasm" (Fisher, 1989, pp. 55 - 56). They determine the answer is "undoubtedly complex" but "as so often is the case in philosophy, that theories just have limited duration, that they, like paintings (at lest as Duchamp thought), are alive for only a generation and then become just historical phenomena" (p. 56).

The members of the symposium concluded: "It is a fact that Dewey does not condense well, and reducing *Art as Experience* to excerpts is an almost impossible

task. [Had I known.] Of course the fact that he is sometimes a very tedious writer hardly denies him access to the temple of influential philosophers of art" (Fisher, 1989, p. 56). They note the "incongruity of the relationship between the obsessively undemocratic Barnes, whose collection is still harder for the public to get into than anything this side of Fort Knox, and the passionately democratic Dewey, who felt that aesthetic experience is a model for all experience, defies explanation" (p. 57). This is especially troublesome when one considers "Dewey's knowledge of the arts and, it would seem from his dedicatory confessions, his aesthetic theory itself, came totally from his associations with Albert Barnes" (p. 58). Dewey's philosophy is based on the central belief that "aesthetic experience is active, dynamic, and at the very core of all considerations of art and its objects" (p. 59).

Richard Shusterman of Temple University in "Why Dewey Now" writes the summation of the symposium, observing that there is nothing to compare to the "comprehensive scope, detailed argument, and passionate power" of *A as E* (Shusterman, 1989b, p. 60). He says the book "initially aroused considerable interest" as the reviews we cited at the beginning of this chapter witness, but that in the late fifties *A as E* was largely dismissed as "a hodge-podge of conflicting methods and undisciplined speculations" (p. 60). Shusterman contends that there are signs of change and that "Dewey's aesthetics provides the right direction" (p. 60). He says that Dewey's aesthetics is based in naturalism and that it modifies and enhances perception and communication. He believes "they energize and inspire because

aesthetic experience is always spilling over and getting integrated into our other activities, enhancing and deepening them" (p. 62). Dewey "deplores elitist tradition" and "the esoteric idea of fine art" (p. 64). Shusterman concludes, "Though some of Dewey's views are undeniably dated, pragmatist aesthetics is not simply a curiosity of the past; it points to the most promising future we can envisage for aesthetic inquiry. To fulfill that future we will have to read and develop its Deweyan past" (p. 66).

In a very brief essay "Aesthetic Experience as a Primary Phase and as an Artistic Development" written less than two years before his death, Dewey responded to criticism of *A as E*, stating that the intention of the book was "to give evidence that this matter of development of the artistic way or form out of a primary aesthetic phase is the 'heart, soul, and mind' of the entire book" (Dewey, 1950, p. 56). He said he was speaking "both of 'esthetic' experience and of 'the esthetic phase of experience.'" Dewey believed the integration of "every normally complete experience, every one that runs its own full course, is aesthetic in its consummatory phase" (p. 56). The arts are "outgrowths of primary aesthetic aspects" (p. 56). Perhaps clearing some earlier confusion, Dewey adds, "that considerable space is given to showing that 'works of art' which are not developed out of a phase of primary experiences are *artificial* rather than *artistic*" (p. 56).

Dewey addresses the relationship of art-making to learning: "It amounts to the following: the case of aesthetic experience with its cultivated development of the

artistic variety out of what is natural and spontaneous in primary experience provides what, in all probability, is the simplest and most direct way in which to lay hold of what is fundamental in all the forms of experience that are traditionally (but fallaciously) regarded as so many different, separate, isolated, independent divisions of subject matter. The traditional and still current habit of separating from each other subject matters that are respectively political, economic, moral, religious, educational, cognitive (under the name of epistemological) and cosmological, thereby treating them as being self-constituted, inherently different, is an illustration of what I reject in the case of the aesthetic" (Dewey, 1950, p. 57). Here Dewey makes the two seminal points that should direct us to apply the philosophy of art as experience to curriculum formation: (a) Initial experiences when aesthetically expressed are culminated as learning modes and that (b) all endeavors are, or certainly should be, united in artistic expression.

# CHAPTER VII:

# CRITICISM OF DEWEY'S WRITING STYLE

# AND THE APPLICATION OF *ART AS EXPERIENCE* TO CHILDREN

Determining the place John Dewey's philosophy of *Art as Experience* in the formation of elementary curriculum has led to an exploration of Dewey's earlier writings and the relationships that influenced how art-based pedagogy could be founded on art as experience. Finally, this exploration reviews the significant influences and writings as they specifically offer insight on how to develop curriculum ideas with *A as E* as the founding principles. Dewey's own writing style must be considered as a factor in why Dewey is not viewed more prominently in the history of art education. Dewey's years with Barnes affected Barnes's views on education that are exemplified in the Foundation's methodology. Dewey's name has become so linked with the Barnes Foundation's mission that it is critical to understand what the Barnes' method reveals about a potential Deweyan pedagogy.

## *Criticism of Dewey's Writing Style*

The majority of reviews have tried to reach a consensus on the difficulty Dewey's writing style can create. Critics range from faulting his meandering verbosity to praising the substance of what he is actually trying to articulate. In *John Dewey And the High Tide of American Liberalism,* Alan Ryan points out "Dewey's characteristic literary product was in the form of a 'lay sermon'" that "was acquired by Dewey in his Sunday morning talks to the students at Michigan. Once he had the

style, he never lost it" whether or not the lay sermon "was an apt style for a modern liberal" (Ryan, 1995, p. 366). One might expect a "lay sermon" to be clear and readily decoded by an average reader, but general consensus contradicts this.

Commenting on Dewey's *Experience and Nature,* George Dykhuizen's *The Life and Mind of John Dewey* applies a quotation of Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes that might apply equally to *Art as Experience*: "But although Dewey's book is incredibly ill written, it seemed to me after several rereadings to have a feeling of intimacy with the inside of the cosmos that I found unequaled. So methought God would have spoken had He been inarticulate but keenly desirous to tell you how it was" (Dykhuizen, 1973, p. 214). Concurring with Justice Holmes, Thomas Alexander says the beginning of *A as E* is "strangely oblique and problematic" (T. M. Alexander, 1987, 187).

In the introduction of *John Dewey's Theory of Art, Experience & Nature: The Horizons of Feeling* Alexander cites an unidentified source, "reading Dewey is like swimming through oatmeal" (1987, p. xii). Yet Thomas Alexander believes that "there are tremendous views to be had by following Dewey through the circuitous, tangled underbrush of his prose, but they can only be reached by following those paths carefully." Alexander astutely observes Dewey's method is "to reconstruct an existing language rather than fabricate a new one" (p. xiii). He concludes that Dewey's thought is "difficult and elusive," in his "deceptive effort to speak plain English" (p. xii). Alexander offers this analogy on reading Dewey: "There are a

number of phases or functionally diverse parts operating at each moment. It is true that there is a temporal overall structure to an experience, and Dewey does tend at times to simplify this structure, so that one might get the impression that every significant moment of human existence follows the pattern of a motorist driving along, oblivious to the world, having a flat tire, being awakened to the need, fixing the tire, and merrily going on his way with the satisfaction of having gotten out of a jam" (pp. 127-128).

In his *John Dewey and the Lessons of Art* Phillip Jackson thinks Arthur Danto — who wrote *After the End of Art: Contemporary Art and the Pale of History*— is correct when he responds to Dewey's writing: "I like things to be clear, I like connections to be clear, and I like to see structures, whereas with Dewey it's an unstructured world in which you sort of move through a fog. However, I feel that you can, from a certain distance, begin to see where Dewey replaces structure with fog. And you can understand why he does it, what the systematic reasons are, and if you take a sufficiently distant view of that, you can see that the lack of structure is one of the great historic alternatives to clarity. But it is not the way I would want to do philosophy" (Jackson, 1998, p. 159). Although Danto finds Dewey's style unstructured and "muddy, like a preacher, portentous and uninteresting" he still finds Dewey's analytic philosophy to be a "somewhat" holistic system (p. 161). In the end Jackson concludes that although Dewey's "writings seldom exemplify the virtues of brevity and crystalline clarity" (p. 160), "Dewey's patient and probing exploration of

human experience" wins him "wide respect, if not grudging admiration" (p. 159). Jackson contends that: "The concepts of culmination, conservation, tension, and anticipation refer to the dynamics of experience. They aid our understanding of what goes on between the onset of an experience and its fulfilling conclusion" (p. 56). I find it reassuring that Holmes and Danto, as well as Jackson and Thomas Alexander, all find that Dewey's meaning becomes clearer with repeated readings.

John Fisher's article "Some Remarks on What Happened to John Dewey" for the 1989 symposium has a quotation from Monroe Beardsley who wrote *Aesthetics from Classical Greece to the Present: A Short History* (1965). Beardsley confesses in an article "Intrinsic Value" (1965), "I am always frustrated in reading Dewey, trying to separate the enormously good points from the confusing ones" (Fisher, 1989, p. 58). Alan Kaplan in the introduction to *The Later Works of John Dewey, 1925-1953,* "suggests that after all, Plato was guilty of circuitous convergences no worse than Dewey's" (p. 58). Fisher ponders "whether it is a compliment or not to note that, while Dewey at his worst is diffuse and repetitive and conspicuously unsuccessful in making himself understood, at his best he is lucid and eloquent, I leave to the reader" (p. 59).

### *Applying the Barnes Method to Children*

Barnes began implementing his educational ideas with his own factory workers. The factory employed about a dozen African-American men "whose schooling had been negligible." Barnes began weekly discussions with them in an

"experiment based on the educational principles of John Dewey" (Cantor, 1963, p. 81). With Dewey's encouragement, the educational mission of the Foundation grew, dedicated "to establish the authentic equalities of men" as a necessary condition for democracy (p. 81). "It must be remembered that from the standpoint of educational method the Foundation is as much the work of Dewey as of Barnes" (p. 44). The Barnes method "is a John Dewey experiment in full life, wherein the ideas crystallize in the students' experience of the paintings rather than by memorization and repetition of separate and abstract dogma" (p. 160). In his initial experiment Barnes applied the "abstruse philosophical and psychological theories of John Dewey" believing that if they "could be made fully accessible to the understanding of untutored workers in Argyrol factory" this would confirm that "a class assembled without regard to prior educational records" could expand "our conceptions of authentic human equality" (p. 160). Barnes envisioned applying this strategy to all educational endeavors throughout society would actualize Dewey's principles of democracy.

The Foundation seems never to have taught children's classes, I have found no mention of children ever being in the gallery. Barnes intended his method to develop appreciation and understanding in adults. However, since he built it on a Deweyan model, it is important to consider how Barnes's method could be applied effectively to children. Three of Barnes's eight articles in the *Journal of The Barnes Foundation* analyze painters and painting —Picasso, Cezanne and "The Evolution of

Contemporary Painting"— and five-addressed art education. The articles' titles clearly reflect the tone of the articles: "The Shame in the Public Schools of Philadelphia," "Art Teaching That Obstructs Education," followed in the next *Journal* by another article with the same title. The next article "Educational Disorder at the Metropolitan Museum, New York" was followed by the *Journals'* final article, "Day-Dreaming in Art Education," in which Barnes rebutted Leo Stein's critique of Barnes's *The Art in Painting* (1929). All the articles vitriolically attacked individuals or the educational methodologies of public schools and museums. However, these articles reveal traits of Barnes's educational philosophy that can be employed productively to the forming of kindergarten and elementary curriculum.

In his article against the educational methods of the Philadelphia public schools the main points of Barnes's railings are in line with Dewey's educational philosophy, despite his demagogic personal attacks. Barnes proposed that art education programs be guided by intelligent purposes supporting individual interests and self-expression. He strongly supported proper preparation for teachers. Dewey declaring a revolt in *A as E* is tame compared to Barnes challenging to the teachers of Philadelphia "to do their duty to their profession by refusing to carry out further the antiquated, unintelligent system now in operation in the public schools" (Barnes, 1925b, p. 17). The teachers of Philadelphia, Barnes said, will be "received as far as possible in our classes," if they only would denounce the current pedagogical methods in place in the school system. He promised that "the Barnes Foundation will

call a town-meeting" if teachers are fired for refusing to teach in such an antiquated pedagogy (p. 17).

In "Art Teaching That Obstruct Education" Barnes railed against art courses that "erect almost insuperable barriers to that development of individual intelligence" and "stifle both self-expression and appreciation of art," as well as the "rational enjoyment of life" (Barnes, 1925d, p. 44). He argued that artists must use a scientific method to approach the "psychology of artistic creation." Teachers must not use "hypothetical generalizations" of punitive "laws" and forced formulas that deprive art of everything fresh, living or distinctive. Barnes rightfully opposed any methodology or practice that establishes an attitude of subservience.

Following up these ideas in his next article Barnes reviewed two educational methods, Dynamic Symmetry and the Pach System. After his abhorrent personal attacks on the founders of both methods, Barnes allowed further hints on his own educational methodology. He found "Dynamic Symmetry" simplistic and naïve of a reductionist formula with strong tendencies to suppress personal vision and imaginative originality. The very existence of the system of Dynamic Symmetry demonstrated to Barnes the "imperative need for a more popular grasp of the rudiments of educational theory and practice" (Barnes, 1925f, p. 25). Barnes also opposed the Pach System as based on outdated inept platitudes, but he mainly attacked Mr. Pach rather than critically examining the system or explaining his alternative methodology.

In “Day-Dreaming in Art Education,” if Barnes was not berating Leo Stein, then he was mainly lecturing him. But as he defended *A in P,* Barnes declared his strong support for teachers acting as experienced guides: “The purpose of education is to distinguish between better and worse and that the student is ordinarily led to form his preferences through the impact upon him of the preferences of others. Statement of a judgment of quality is not dogmatism if warning is given that method is one thing, specific application another, and this is definitely stated in the preface to the book in question” (Barnes, 1926d, p. 47). Here he most clearly defended his educational philosophy: “The important point which Mr. Stein never even considers is this: can errors arising from a subjective bias in the application of the method be corrected by application of the same method, in the hands of someone else, whose bias is different or opposed? If they can, then the method is scientific in character. Since the primary purpose of the book is to present a method, and the evaluations of particular painters and paintings are chiefly incidental and illustrative, it would seem that, in common fairness, Mr. Stein ought to have given some attention to this question” (p. 47). This may be Barnes’s finest moment as an art education theoretician. He openly and honestly appealed to Stein to apologize for misrepresenting what Barnes believed his friend knew to be true. Seven years later, in 1933, Barnes dedicated *The Art of Henri-Matisse*, that he co-authored with Violette de Mazia: “To Leo Stein Who was the first to recognize the genius of Matisse and who, more than twenty years ago, inspired the study which has culminated in this book” (Barnes & Mazia, 1933, p. 166).

In her memoirs Violette de Mazia (1899 -1989), who "wrote in collaboration" (Schack, 1963, p. 193) with Barnes on four books —Schack contends she was the main author— reflected the educational methodology of the Barnes Foundation, especially in the 37 years she ran the Foundation after Barnes's death. French-born, London-educated, de Mazia came to the Foundation in 1925, and served as an instructor beginning in 1927 (p. 208). "Always available, always loyal to the man and his ideas, she never failed him" (Greenfeld, 1987, p. 145). She "conveyed the impression that she thought his [Barnes's] opinions were unassailable" (Meyers, 2004, p. 308). In 1950 she was appointed the Foundation's Director of the Art Department (Schack, 1963, p. 402). After Barnes's death, Greenfeld observes, "Violette de Mazia has become the Barnes Foundation, and the Barnes Foundation is Violette de Mazia" (p. 145). "In addition to her class in Aesthetic appreciation, de Mazia had a hand in designing the Foundation curriculum" (Meyers, 2004, p. 155), and "was largely responsible for the design of the basic course offered by the Barnes Foundation for half a century" (p. 306). In the spring of 1970 she revived the *Journal* (p. 308) for eight issues and remained with the Foundation until her death.

The Foundation was not merely a collection, rather de Mazia believed "in both plan and function, [it was] a laboratory for investigating the objective method of understanding and its application to the study of the fundamental principles of aesthetic expression" (Meyers, 2004, p. 313). According to de Mazia, the Foundation's goal was to provide a usable educational experience, "one which equips

the student with working knowledge of the concepts with which to explore and unravel the meaning of whatever he encounters in his field of interest" (p. 313). Her own teaching to which she was utterly devoted was well documented (pp. 307-308). Although her lectures dominated her classes, the classes clearly were Socratic (Cantor, 1963, p. 55), based on her questions to the students and on theirs to her. Her method created a dialogue as she guided the students' observations through a social exchange that would encompass the totality of their experiences.

Barnes strongly believed one should follow the path of one's own opinion and convictions through any warrantable assertions that might seem plausible. Although he did not readily tolerate dissenting ideas, he clung to his method and truly believed it was founded on the exchange of ideas through dialogue and Dewey's principles. However, faced with any disagreement, Barnes would use "a cannon to kill a mouse" (Greenfeld, 1987, p. 53). If one removes the vitriolic expression of his arguments, at its core Barnes's method is a quest for the exchanging of ideas. He aligned himself with Dewey's emphasis on the experience of the individual, holding steadfastly that he was following Dewey's methodology. In flushing out Barnes's educational methodology from his published writings one sees that he reflects many of Dewey's tenets, and point the way to applying *A as E* to curriculum formation. Although Glass says that "in many ways, Barnes's character and temperament have had a significant effect on the current philosophy of the Foundation" (Glass, 1997, p. 100), it is important not let Barnes's immaturity in his personal relationships

undermine the value of his work with art education, nor confuse the mission of the Foundation with his personality quirks.

Barnes guarded his fortress in Merion (Cantor, 1963, p. 5) much as the Knights Templar were said to guard the Holy Grail. From his "private garden of delights" (p. 7), Barnes pursued his "lifelong study of the science of psychology as applied to education and aesthetics" (p. 12). Cantor observes that "Prior to publication of *A in P* analysis of paintings in terms of the plastic means was virtually unheard of, whereas there is little that is taught or written today which does not contain something of this approach . . ." (p. 67). Unfortunately, Glass notes, the Foundation is "never considered wholly apart from the personality of its founder" who is viewed predominantly as messianic and mean-spirited (Glass, 1997, p. 102). Cantor says, the Foundation perhaps is "merely another vengeful act by 'the terrible-tempered Dr. Barnes'" (Cantor, pp. 116-117).

Within Barnes's method, built upon Dewey's ideas, "nothing is taken for granted" and "nothing in the realm of experience is accepted on blind faith" (Cantor, 1963, p. 44). Barnes intended his method of "plasticity" to be "applied to anything that can be bent or worked or changed into a form other than that which it originally had" (p. 40). Whenever separate images are compared to determine how they relate and inform us about each other and their collective meaning we are, to some extent, using the Barnes method. Barnes and Dewey "influenced each other in a relationship of mutual value and long duration, frankly and gratefully acknowledged on both

sides. It is difficult to think of a comparable symbiosis in the history of Western thought" (p. 61).

*Other Thoughts of Dewey's on Art as Applied to Children's Curriculum*

Although the Barnes' Foundation did not apply Dewey's philosophy of aesthetics in education to children, *Art as Experience* finds its true voice when it is applied to children's art-making and helps reveal how we integrate experiences into our thought processes. This idea of integrating experiences alone suggests *A as E'*s promise as a philosophy for teaching and learning. Experience couples memory and the circumstances of the present moment, with an ever-enfolding third element: our projection of the future. "The fulfillment or realization of the anticipation is the most heightened phase of the aesthetic experience" (Hook, 1971, p. 201). The connections between an act and its consequences enlighten our perceptions of their meanings. Art-making is a process of revelation. Art defines experience by relating means and expression. The substructure of art-making is developing ideas and connecting them to form new knowledge that is derived personally by subconsciously merging imagery and connotations to realize the present moment.

*A as E* is Dewey's ultimate attempt to transcend all the old dualisms "because the aesthetic experience is distinctively capable of grasping experience in general as a process of articulation or growth, it succeeds in providing the basis for overcoming any dualism which separates man from the world or from his fellow human beings. Art, in this sense, unites the metaphysical and political aspects of Dewey's

philosophy" (T. M. Alexander, 1987, p. 186). Alexander contends, "The work of art comes to be the project of sharing an organized response to the universe" (p. 188) as "art forces us to think about how human beings are related to the world and to each other" (p. 189). We feel fulfilled on the random occasions when we "enjoy the abstract harmony of our own faculties" (p. 189). The dualisms of "self and world, soul and body, nature and God" limit our experience, whether self- or socially imposed. Dewey sought to break through these dividing walls by synthesizing "subject and object, matter and spirit and the divine and the human" (p. 16).

Art then acts as a "transcendental synthesizing agent" (Alexander, 1987, p. 80) to encompass the seemingly discrete components of the elementary curriculum, divided into math, language arts, geography, science, and history. Alexander concludes, "art marks the occasion where the possibilities for the significant configuration of the world are actualized" (p. 197). On Dewey's dualisms, Harry Campbell, in *John Dewey* (1971) writes, "It may be noted that he equates 'religion and art,' a combination which becomes clear when we examine *Art as Experience*" (p. 67). Dewey "makes clear" in *A as E* that "resistance and tension enable the artist to bring to living consciousness an experience that is unified and total" (Campbell, 1971, p. 79). Campbell argues that "The mystical experience is partly the result of man's own synthesizing imagination, but it is also part of the process of nature which 'becomes conscious with' man" (p. 82). Five years after *A as E,* in *Theory of Valuation* (1939), Dewey focused on desire as the "defining characteristic that

differentiates human from nonhuman behavior" and thus determines that the "unity of science must be realized in the integration of 'science' with 'desire'" (Martin, 2002, p. 434). In *Experience and Education* (1938) Dewey's contention is that "the principle of continuity of experience means that every experience both takes up something from those [experiences] which have gone before and modifies in some way the quality of those which come after" (*EE*, Dewey, 1938, p. 35).

Within the scope of Dewey's work, *C & C* and *S & S* —emphasizing learning by doing— brought art into the child's school life, giving art-making more significance than merely preparation for good penmanship or another tool to instill moral or patriotic values. *A as E* moves art to the center of epistemology and learning. In 1910, in *How We Think,* Dewey had mused on the formation of our cognitive processes: "The imaginative stories poured forth by children possess all degrees of internal congruity; some are disjointed, some are articulated. When connected, they simulate reflective thought; indeed, they usually occur in minds of logical capacity. These imaginative enterprises often precede thinking of the close-knit type and prepare the way for it" (*HWT*, Dewey, 1997, p. 3).

While an explicitly Deweyan art curriculum has never developed, Dewey's philosophy undeniably has filtered into every classroom. Coming from the 19th century curriculum of recitation and memorization to today's classroom, although it is clear contemporary pedagogy has only partially reached a reality that invokes the quest of learning by doing, in a classroom when children move about, engage in

activities, and interact with each other, Dewey's presence can be felt. As children experiment with materials and work in widely varying activities that recall Dewey's "occupations," Dewey's pervasive influence can be witnessed.

Dewey expressed his paradigm of how the mind forms its habits in the philosophy of art as experience: "The most important factor in the training of good mental habits consists in acquiring the attitude of suspended conclusion, and in mastering the various methods of searching for new materials to corroborate or to refute the first suggestions that occur" (*HWT*, Dewey, 1997, p. 13). This experimental, even scientific attitude, which suspends conclusions and searches past the first idea that comes to mind to develop individualized solutions, invokes the processes of true art-making. A child naturally embarks on this process when presented with paper and a box of watercolors. Art-making establishes a mental matrix that is applicable to all endeavors.

In *How We Think* Dewey presented the artist as working toward a goal, with "recognition of the end" that is to be achieved (*HWT*, 1997, p. 220). This does not directly apply to the five-year-old child, as a child's goal is not primarily seeking the end when he or she begins an art project. Children are not working for an end result, they are engaging in the process of painting while painting. When he or she picks up the brush, charges it with paint, the color he or she chooses by predilection or inspiration is not usually done with a projection of "the end they serve" (p. 220). With the child, it is the process that focuses and opens the mind to explore feelings,

experience and knowledge. This is the true "attitude of the artist," motivated by inspiration. Dewey asked us to apply this attitude to all pursuits, as it is the most productive attitude to assume when approaching all opportunities.

Ryan observes, "Dewey's interest in problem solving was unlike that of 'how to' writing." Dewey "was skeptical of technical fixes" and sought expressions that changed "people's attitudes to themselves and one another" (1995, p. 366). Dewey saw suppression of people through restricting educational freedom as a "crime against democracy" (Martin, 2002, p. 441). He viewed American education as "'unalterably opposed' to 'prejudice, bigotry, and unenlightenment'" (p. 442).

Glass thinks "Dewey was supportive of Barnes's program because he saw it as extending his own biologically based theories to the field of aesthetics" (Glass, 1997, p. 96). Dewey viewed Barnes as making "fundamental biological conceptions" possible to apply to "the whole field of artistic structures and aesthetic criticism" (Dewey, 1926b, p. 9). Dewey saw the Foundation's method as breaking "down the traditional separation between scientific and intellectual systems and those of art," as well as furthering "the application of the principle of integration to the relationship of those elements of culture which are so segregated in our present life —to science, art, in its variety of forms, industry and business, religion, sport and morals" (p. 9).

In his own teaching Dewey pursued ideas through means of dialogue to reach consensus. "Dewey practiced the very ideas he was teaching by working with the thought raised in discussion, not as fact or dogma, but as a hypothesis to be tested"

(Glass, 1997, p. 100). This practice reflects his simple dictum from 1910, "To prove a thing means primarily to try, to test it" (*HWT*, 1997, p. 27). One of Dewey's students said, "To attend a John Dewey lecture was to participate in the actual business of thought." In a Dewey lecture, that student felt, they were "listening to a man actually *thinking* in the presence of a class" (Jackson, 1987, p. 184). "They saw a well-stocked and original mind, remarkably free from any sort of bias or prejudice, engaged in the patient and honest exploration of 'whole situations' in experience with the aid of penetrating distinctions and a full-fledged 'theory of inquiry'" (p. 184). His teaching style provided opportunities "to witness first hand a person deeply engaged in thought" (p. 185). In *Studies in Logical Theory* Dewey said that aesthetic experience "is the simplest and most direct way in which to lay hold of what is fundamental in all the forms of experience that are traditionally (but fallaciously) regarded as so many different, separate, isolated, independent divisions of subject matter" (Burnett, 1989, p. 54).

### *Considerations of Dewey's Aesthetics in* A as E

Throughout Dewey's writings, other ideas offer insight into his stances on art and education. In *Experience and Education,* 1938, Dewey explained, "Every experience is a moving force. Its value can be judged only on the ground of what it moves toward and into" (*EE,* 1938, p. 38). Art-making progresses through one artistic expression that inevitably leads to another and its development. The principles of continuity and interaction are not separate from each other (p. 44). "Even when a

person builds a castle in the air he is interacting with objects which he constructs in fancy" (p. 44). Even in building castles in the air thought progresses and develops, enhancing an exploratory attitude. In *How We Think* (1910) Dewey offered this enthusiastic view: "Eagerness for experience, for new and varied contacts is found where wonder is found" (*HWT,* 1997, p. 31). A sense of wonder motivates the child's interest.

In Dewey's 1925 *Experience and Nature* he laid the foundations for developing his philosophy of art as experience, and these ideas can be applied to children's curriculum design. Dewey aligns the creation of thought to the artistic endeavor: "Thinking is pre-eminently an art: and propositions which are the products of thinking, are works of art, . . ." (*EN*, 1958, p. 378). When this concept of Dewey's is applied to children, the thinking processes can be seen as being both established and enhanced through art-making. Dewey interpreted inductive and deductive systems of thought, and his distinctions apply directly to children engaging in formative activities. "There is only one mode of thinking, the inductive, when thinking denotes anything that actually happens" (p. 381). Inductive thinking denotes Dewey's method of learning by doing. "Deduction deals directly with meanings in their relations to one another . . ." (p. 380). Deductions are comprised of conclusions formed in the inductive process of direct interaction with the act of making, and results in new knowledge. "Knowledge or science, as a work of art, like any other work of art, confers upon things traits and potentialities which did not *previously*

belong to them" (p. 381). These "traits and potentialities" that did "not *previously*" belong to them becomes part of the inceptive experiences, and fuses them into the core of the child's knowledge. The child then can apply the new understandings to other unrelated situations.

Dewey believed that there is a significant potential for loss through dividing the disciplines, and asks educators to focus on the possible gains created by integrating all the subjects that comprise a school's curriculum. These potential losses and possible gains are central issues of curriculum formation as children are engaged to incorporate their experiences. "When an art of thinking as appropriate to human and social affairs has grown up as that used in dealing with distant stars, it will not be necessary to argue that science is one among the arts and among the works of art. It will be enough to point to observable situations. The separation of science from art, and the division of arts into those concerned with mere means and those concerned with ends in themselves, is a mask for lack of conjunction between power and the goods of life" (*EN,* 1958, p. 383). Dewey believed extending the same criteria that is used in observing distant stars should inform all avenues of thought. The divisions of knowledge can render one's understandings inoperable if a person is not able to apply what has been previously experienced to the experience of the present moment.

Dewey's inclusion of art-making in all curriculum areas offers students the opportunity to express their ideas and experiences as they develop their own conceptual understandings. "Evidence of the interpenetration of the efficacious with

the final in art is found in the slow emancipation of art from magical rite and cult, and the emergence of science from superstition" (*EN,* 1958, p. 384). Dewey placed art at the center of civilization: "In short, the history of human experience is a history of the development of arts. The history of science in its distinct emergence from religious, ceremonial and poetic arts is the record of a differentiation of arts, not a record of separation from art" (p. 388).

In *Experience and Nature*, Dewey had already explored the nature of art within the realm of experience as we find it in *A as E.* "Either art is a continuation, by means of intelligent selection and arrangement, of natural tendencies of natural events; or art is a peculiar addition to nature springing from something dwelling exclusively within the breast of man, whatever name be given the latter" (*EN,* 1958, p. 389). Dewey defined art as "delightfully enhanced perception" with the creative processes forming an outcome as "a skilled and intelligent art of dealing with natural things for the sake of intensifying, purifying, prolonging and deepening the satisfactions which they spontaneously afford" (p. 389). "Emotion is an indication of intimate participation . . . " (p. 390), as art "represents the culminating event of nature as well as the climax of experience" (p. xvi). For Dewey art is a mental process organizing disparate elements. This concept is central to an art-based curriculum. "'Art' does not create the forms; it is their selection and organization in such ways as to enhance, prolong and purify the perceptual experience" (p. 391).

In *A as E* Dewey focused his exploration of how we learn to include the instrumental powers of art as an educational tool. The richness and order nurtured through art-making become processes of self-actualization in the child's life as he or she explores the efforts of history and science, as means to express her and his imagination. The ongoing and expanding nature of art leads the child and artist on to a greater culmination of their experience. "For although there is a bounding horizon, it moves as we move. We are never wholly free from the sense of something that lies beyond" (*AE,* 1934, p. 193). Alexander concludes "the highest expressions of religion are rooted in this desire to adjust the whole of our being to the universe as a whole in a satisfying and meaningful manner" (1987, p. 194). "'Experience,' therefore, comes to signify for Dewey the fullest, richest and most dynamic unity of universal meaning embodied in concrete individuality, that is, as absolute self-realization" (p. 24). Art then becomes a thought process at the pinnacle of human development.

Art-making creates a landscape for the child to explore his or her subconscious mind. Merge art-making with teacher-directed curriculum activities and the sharing of their classmates artworks directly applies Dewey's vision of *Art as Experience* to be fulfilled in the school lives of our children. For the teacher art-based activities are gifts that offer endless opportunities to expand and interrelate their curriculum goals. Dewey's quest for a motivational activity leads to art-making. Happiness and delight, said Dewey, "come to be through a fulfillment that reaches to the depths of our being –one that is an adjustment of our whole being with the

conditions of existence" (*AE,* 1934, p. 17). Although that may not sound like the definition of "happiness," the quest for fulfillment is every person's primary desire. "Dewey attempts to demonstrate the internal integrity of experience by showing how its three major modes, knowing, feeling, and willing, all mutually imply each other" (T. M. Alexander, 1987, p. 25). Within this culmination true satisfaction is experienced. For Dewey "art represents the most successful effort to control the chance conditions by which such experiences are had" (p. 200). "A 'conclusion' is no separate and independent thing; it is the consummation of a movement" (*AE,* p. 38). "The experience itself has a satisfying emotional quality because it possesses internal integration and fulfillment reached through ordered and organized movement" (p. 38). In the classroom this journey of self-discovery most significantly flowers as a positive "can do" self-efficacy and pervasive sense of fulfillment leading to joy.

Combine Dewey's strange little mantra from *E & N:* "Art is the sole alternative to luck" (*EN,* 1958, p. 372) with Alexander's belief that "every artist must harbor a discerning critic or create by luck alone" (1987, p. 211) and they reveal how the child's developing intellectual abilities truly benefit from art-making. Through self-reflection and critical analysis children learn to discern and reason. Their own creations become maps for their individual learning path. They learn to balance their insights and understandings by sharing and discussing each other's artwork. While mediating critiques and responses, the teacher guides and directs the analysis, ensuring that all participate, even the shyest student.

Through these processes "experience which is artistically shaped becomes expressive" (T. M. Alexander, 1987, p. 213). Over time, with practice, the child develops the ability to make reasoned judgments. Alexander says, "This is where Dewey's analysis of *an* experience as a gradual, developmental, or growing process of articulation is helpful" (p. 218). He holds that: "When Dewey speaks in *A as E* of the intuitive quality which pervades and unifies an experience, he is therefore pointing toward something of far deeper significance than just a continuous orientation toward the world and ourselves" (p. 257).

Each child discovers aspects of him or herself in shared experiences that develop understanding and empathy as well as a heightened sense of his or her own character. "Individuality is the creative incarnation of meaning, of mind, into an experience" (Alexander, 1987, p. 104). Shared activities and insights of individual students seem to coalesce into a distinct classroom identity. Alexander contends that because "the community comes to be in expressive activity; the world comes to mean through our shared encounter with nature and with each other" (p. 264).

Alexander cautions, "The social dimension cannot be forgotten" (1987, p. 264). Remember, the reason, children choose to come to school is to be with his or her friends. Art establishes and encourages the primary skills of friendship that will benefit the child throughout his or her lifetime. In sharing each other's artwork the basis for meaningful friendships is enhanced. When a child tells what her or his artwork means, and listens to their classmates' views and ideas, they begin to

appreciate each other's motivations, meanings and emotions. "Art is this very process of imaginatively enlarging experience, thereby establishing communication through education" (p. 271). Of this process, Alexander says, "the primary factor in education is the culture itself" (p. 271). The creation of an art-centered community is the foundation of Dewey's fervent desire to create democracy. Alexander emphasizes, "Genuine communication is only achieved through a creative transformation of experience which involves the combination of a rich cultural matrix, the critical use of intelligence, and the active struggle to establish continuity or growth" (p. 274). Alexander's believes communication encompasses all experience, and should be the central focus of the goals and methodology in our schools. "In the end, works of art are the only media of complete and unhindered communication between man and man that can occur in a world full of gulfs and walls that limit community of experience" (*AE*, 1934, p. 105).

To create the guidelines on which a Deweyan based curriculum based on art as experience can be established, it is important to consider what Dewey actually said in *A as E* in direct relation to children. *A as E* is not a guide to curriculum formation but Dewey's philosophy of teaching and learning in relation to art can offer insight into the knowledge and understanding of the possibilities for art-making within a child's experience. The next chapter we will analysis Dewey's direct references to children and analysis their meaning if contemplated with children's curriculum formation as the goal.

# CHAPTER VIII:

## CHILDREN AS ADDRESSED IN JOHN DEWEY'S *ART AS EXPERIENCE*

John Dewey was 75 years old when *Art as Experience* was published in 1934. *A as E* is Dewey's opus on the relationship of people to art. Children and their relationship to art are not addressed significantly within the book. He does not discuss the educational opportunities or insights that the relationship of children and their art could reveal. This is surprising since the development of curriculum and the factors that effect pedagogy had been a recurring theme of Dewey's as witnessed in chapter I of this dissertation with *Postscript: Three Years of the University Elementary School* (1899), *The School and Society* (1900), and *The Child and the Curriculum* (1902).

However, the relationship children have with art-making could be viewed as embodying the theories *Art As Experience* presents. In the book Dewey develops his philosophy to create an understanding of people in the consideration of art both as viewers and creators. Children, with their intuitive ability to immerse themselves in total concentration while making art, could be offered as the model for the philosophy that Dewey seeks to define and explore in *A as E.*

*Dewey's References to Children in* A as E

Dewey specifically refers to children only 26 times in the whole of the 349 pages of text.[*] Although I am not certain that I have found every reference to children in the text, I intended this to be a complete chronicling of Dewey's child references in *A as E.* My view of Dewey's specific references to children has changed considerably through the process of identifying the quotations referring to children, analyzing them and then reconstructing them. Of the 26 times Dewey refers to children in the text there are two instances where six of these quotations are within six pages of each other and are more or less part of a single point. There are one set of three references in two pages and a set of two in consecutive pages. Taking both those sets of references in consideration of each other, that brings the 26 citations down to twelve separate references to children, four of which are used simply to characterize children as uninitiated or inexperienced. Of the remaining nine references, four are

[*] The word "child" or some derivation does appear another five times usually in reference to a title of an artist's work as on page 31 in Dewey's sighting of Pater's "The Child in the House," or on page 128 where Dewey cites "Velasquez's painting of the child Maria Theresa." "Child" does appear in a couple of quotations as in Wordsworth: "story of the child faithful unto death," and when Dewey includes part of the poem "Lucy Gray": "Yet some maintain that to this day She is a living child" (*AE*, 1934, p. 131). Twice he refers to the child or youth as a relational contrast as on page 134 in speaking of "The relations of friendship, of husband and wife, of parent and child . . ." On page 212 in citing a drama by Isben he refers to "old age and encroaching youth." Beyond those are just two occasions when there is a reference to "girls": on page 178 he refers to "the ballet girls of Degas," and page 281 he includes a quotation of Browning: "And that's your Venus – whence we turn To yonder girl that fords the burn."

devoted to emphasizing the child's lack of distinction between work and play in art-making. Two of Dewey's quotations make the seminal point that through art all activities can be united. These three ideas of Dewey's culminate in his overarching view that with the unity of thought in the focusing on direct activities we learn most successfully. If these points are taken in combination with the declaration of the power of art as a means of communication, from page 347, then Dewey has proposed a remarkable declaration of the power and benefit of art-based education.

### *Isolating Dewey's Quotations About Children*

I will isolate each of Dewey's references to children in *Art As Experience* in the order they appear in the text. Following each quotation I include a brief analysis of Dewey's references. In the next chapter, I cite selected quotations from the rest of the text that could define the philosophy of art as experience if considered with children and their art-making in mind. From these two exercises I then construct a synopsis of *A as E* and a set of guidelines that can be applied in determining the viability of an art-based curriculum crafted from Dewey's aesthetic philosophy.

### *Direct References to Children in Dewey's* Art As Experience

Below are Dewey's 26 quotations in complete sentences that include the word "children" or a derivation of "child." When helpful, I have included the preceding or following sentences to the references.

1. “A child’s experience may be intense, but, because of lack of background from past experience, relations between undergoing and doing are slightly grasped, and the experience does not have great depth or breath” (*AE*, Dewey, 1934, p.44). In this first quotation Dewey describes the child as uninitiated. The contrast between the child’s experience and the adult’s experience seems to dismiss or undervalue the child’s experience compared with the adult’s experience due to a lack of “background.” Dewey’s statement faults the child’s experience for not grasping the “relations between undergoing and doing.” Yet the heart of Dewey’s philosophy of art as experience is achieving this very condition of not being separate from the art.

The next six quotations of Dewey are in the first six pages of chapter IV: “The Act of Expression” (pp. 58 – 63) and should be brought together to understand their meaning.

2. “Observations of children discovers (sic) many specialized reactions. But they are not, therefore, inceptive of complete experiences. They enter into the latter only as they are woven as strands into an activity that calls the whole self into play. Overlooking these generalized activities and paying attention only to the differentiations, the divisions of labor, which render them more efficient, are pretty much the source and cause of all further errors in the interpretation of experience“ (*AE*, 1934, p. 58). I see this idea as a fundamental principle of art-core curriculum. This is Dewey’s most complex statement on children and art.

The sentence acknowledges that separating activities may make them more efficient but if experiences are separated from other activities, from the complete experience, they become "pretty much the source and cause of all errors in the interpretation of experience." Specialized activities are not inceptive, if they are separated from the whole experience. Dividing activities may make them more efficient, but isolating divisions creates future problems or schisms in interpreting experiences and forming a cohesive conceptual understanding. Art can be the unifying experience of the separate and specialized curriculum activities of children. This concept is essential to the principles of art-based curriculum.

3. "That which merely discourages a child and one who lacks a matured background of relevant experiences is an incitement to intelligence to plan and convert emotion into interest, on the part of those who have previously had experiences of situations sufficiently akin to be drawn upon" (*AE*, 1934, p. 60). The presentation of a discouraging activity as an "incitement to intelligence to plan and convert emotion into interest" by those who have previous experience that they "can draw upon" is Dewey endorsing the role of the teacher. The experienced lead children in their educational development, by assisting children in creating solutions to the problems that they encounter. Dewey defines the solution to the problem as converting "emotion into interest." Art-making in its purity is the creation of problems, and solving

those problems can lead the child through a guided process of converting their emotions into the discovery and expression of their interests. The essence of this sentence is Dewey contending that the experienced one has the opportunity to guide the "one who lacks experience." This experienced guide engages the uninitiated to overcome discouragement and develop creative self-fulfilling activities.

4. "Again the cry or smile of an infant may be expressive to mother or nurse and yet not be an act of expression of the baby. To the onlooker it is an expression because it tells something about the state of the child. But the child is only engaged in doing something directly, no more expressive from his standpoint than is breathing or sneezing – activities that are also expressive to the observer of the infant's condition" (*AE*, 1934, p. 61). Dewey is observing an infant child and distinguishing between what is expressed naturally and what is expressed as an intentional act.
5. "As the infant matures, he learns that particular acts effect different consequences, that, for example, he gets attention if he cries, and that smiling induces another definite response from those about him. He thus begins to be aware of the meaning of what he does. As he grasps the meaning of an act at first performed from sheer internal pressure, he becomes capable of acts of true expression" (*AE*, 1934, p. 62). Putting aside the flatulence reference and applying the idea to children and their art-making, has Dewey acknowledging

that the artwork of a child would have a full experience of art if it elicits responses from others as an act of "true expression."

6. "The child who has learned the effects his once spontaneous act has upon those around him performs 'on purpose' an act that was blind" (*AE*, 1934, p. 62). The child learns to control her or his actions that are made for predetermined results and are dictated by the perceived and projected consequences.
7. "The child may now cry for a purpose, because he wants attention or relief. He may begin to bestow his smiles as inducements or as favors. There is now art in incipiency. An activity that was 'natural' — spontaneous and unintended — is transformed because it is undertaken as a means to a consciously entertained consequence. Such transformation marks every deed of art. The results of the transformation may be artful rather than esthetic" (*AE*, 1934, pp. 62-63). Intentionality in the act is necessary in establishing purpose, and, though "artful," the act may not necessarily be of fully esthetic value. Intentional transformations are definitive and are of the processes by which we establish our conceptions and our identities.
8. "I do not think that the dancing and singing of even little children can be explained wholly on the basis of unlearned and unformed responses to then existing objective occasions. Clearly there must be something in the present to evoke happiness. But the act is expressive only as there is in it a unison of

something stored from past experience, something therefore generalized, with present conditions" (*AE*, 1934, p. 71). The response to "something in the present" in unison with something that triggers memory may be expressed in an act of creation that evokes happiness. Here Dewey first refers to very early memories of children being transformed into artful expressions. Dewey's observations coincide with my own experience in watching very young two-and-three-year olds dancing to live music on the patio of an outdoor café. The younger of the children dance with an expressive style that is clearly memory derived, whether the movement is an expression of crib bouncing while holding the railing, or an imitation of someone they witnessed dancing. The music provides the "objective occasion" and becomes the definition of the "present conditions." I feel I have clearly observed this sentence and share Dewey's conclusion wholeheartedly. Children, even very young children, transform experiences through the expression of present circumstances and immediate influences in a merger of memory with spontaneous inspiration. Unlearned and untutored responses to existing objective occasions are evoked by something in the present and become expressive in a union of past experiences and present conditions.

9. "In the case of the expressions of happy children the marriage of past values and present incidents takes place easily; there are few obstructions to be overcome, few wounds to heal, few conflicts to resolve. With the mature

persons, the reverse is the case" (*AE*, 1934, p. 71). My experiences working with a range of special needs children bear out the notion that children can have very complex emotional lives. Dewey's clearly privileging distinction of "happy children" could be expanded to include and address all children, although Dewey does not seem to intend a generalization to include the responses and circumstances of all children. The conditions of children's happiness would have to take into consideration the stark realities of the poverty and the circumstances of orphans in the 1930s, as well as the difficulties of the high divorce rate and its consequences can have on some of today's children. The exposure of continual media information that today's children are confronted with would also have to be considered in a generalization of children's happiness as well. Dewey is speaking of an idealized, well tended and comforted child in his connotation of "happy children." I do not mean to quibble and lose Dewey's point recognizing the ability of children to "easily" fuse the past and present in the expression of their activities. Children intrinsically have the ability to express a "marriage of past values and present incitements" instinctively without the fear and resentments that adulthood most understandably can produce. The ability of children to transcend "obstructions, wounds and conflicts" is what makes children such free, daring and expressive artists.

10. "Accordingly the achievement of complete unison is rare; but when it occurs it is so on a deeper level and with fuller content of meaning. And then, even though after long incubation and after precedent pangs of labor, the final expression may issue with the spontaneity of the cadenced speech of rhythmic movement of happy childhood" (*AE*, 1934, p. 72). Experiencing the past and present together in the given moment is rare; the achievement is Dewey's goal for viewer and artist with the work of art and is his chosen metaphor for the achievement of the spontaneity of "happy childhood."
11. "Matisse is reported to have said: 'When a painting is finished, it is like a new-born child. The artist himself must have time for understanding it.' It must be lived with as a child is lived with, if we are to grasp the meaning of his being" (*AE*, 1934, p. 106). This quotation of Matisse is about the birth of a painting and his use of the word "child" is analogous rather than being about the nature of children outside of acknowledging each child's innate individuality.
12. "The city man who lived in the country when he was a boy is given to purchasing pictures of green meadows with grazing cattle or purling brooks – especially if there is also a swimming hole. He obtains from such pictures a revival of certain values of his childhood minus attendant back-breaking experiences, plus, indeed, an added emotional value because of contrast with a present well-to-do estate. In all such cases the picture is not seen. The painting

is used as a spring board for arriving at sentiments that are, because of extraneous subject-matter, agreeable. The subject-matter of experiences of childhood and youth is nevertheless a subconscious background of much great art" (*AE,* 1934, p. 113). Dewey uses "boy" and "childhood" in relation to the adult art collector and the influence of a collector's childhood memories on their choices. Dewey is using this imaginary city man to illustrate the lasting place of childhood memories on the formation of an individual. Dewey argues that one of the origins of artistic enlightenment springs freely from such recreations of the feelings when reflecting on childhood and is "the subconscious background of much great art."

13. "Hudson was a person of extraordinary sensitiveness to the sensuous surface of the world. Speaking of his childhood when he was, as he says, 'just a little wild animal running around on its hind legs, amazingly interested in the world in which it found itself" (*AE*, 1934, p. 125), Dewey presents childhood as a Rousseauan natural state, fully present and "amazingly interested" in the perceivers' own surroundings and circumstances.
14. "Art, like that of Hudson himself in recreating the experience of childhood, but carries further, through selection and concentration, the reference to an object, to organization and order beyond mere sense, implicit in the experience of the child" (*AE*, 1934, p. 126). Dewey honors the child's experience as a source of artistic inception but says it must undergo further

refinement through acquired adult experience. Dewey succinctly pronounces: "Art" is "implicit in the experience of the child" (p. 126).

15. "Watch young children who have the intention of acting in a play, and a succession of unrelated movements will be observed. They gesticulate, tumble and roll, each pretty much on his own account, with little reference to what others are doing. The acts of even the same child have little sequence. Such a case exemplifies, by way of contrast, the artistic relation between intensity and extension" (*AE*, 1934, p. 181). Dewey's imaginary example casts the children as unaware participant in a theatrical production where they completely merge the work of the theatrical production and their own self-generated play. Dewey's use of the "intensity and extension" contrasts the intensity of the child engrossed in the moment with the extension and range of the child's past experiences. Dewey's scenario exemplifies the engagement of children in direct experience. As they recreate their memories, throughout their lives, perhaps this is the very definition of art as experience, when the artist or viewer is as a child in the all encompassing joy of creating an art form in their play.
16. "Even a child soon learns that it is through light that the world becomes visible" (*AE*, 1934, p. 234). Dewey sees the child as embodying a person becoming aware of the physics of the world.

17. "The grandma telling stories of "once upon a time" to children at her knee passes on and colors the past; she prepares material for literature and may be herself an artist" (*AE*, 1934, p. 240). Grandma fills the role of the teacher, and perhaps artist. She begins initiating the child with experiences that will be part of the formation of their conceptual development. The child will interpret the experience with Grandma throughout their life and use it as part of her or his own artistic expression.
18. "When I am in a room with people, if I am ever free from speculating on creations of my own brain, then, not myself goes home to myself, but the identity of every one in the room begins to press upon me, so that I am in a very little time annihilated -– not only among men; it would be the same in a nursery of children" (*AE*, 1934, p. 257). Dewey expresses loosing the self to the collective, being equitable to children in a nursery loosing their individuality and egos as they merge with the other children around them. By equating the annihilation of his individual presence in a room of adults with the parallel case of the child in the nursery, he acknowledges that children connect in shared experiences and their responses to those experiences.
19. "From giving heed to acts and objects, mind comes also to signify, to obey — as children are told to mind their parents. In short 'to mind' denotes an activity that is intellectual, to *note* something; affectional, as caring and liking, and volitional, practical, acting in a purposive way" (*AE*, 1934, p. 263).

Dewey refers to children as he relates the word “mind” with the concept of “to mind” which regulates acts that determine. He defines “to mind,” or to obey, as intellectually to note something with affection, volition and practicality, to act in a “purposive” [purposeful] way. Here Dewey emphasizes that the mind is active and responsive.

20. “Children are often said to make-believe when they play. But children at play are at least engaged in actions that give their imagery an outward manifestation; in their play, idea and act are completely fused” (*AE*, 1934, p. 278). Play and engaged action outwardly manifest imagery that fuses idea and action. A child’s intellectual gift is unwittingly integrating experience. Dewey allows the initial thought to coalesce, then qualifies it in the next sentence often by starting sentences with “But.” He uses this devise in the quotation from page 347.

21. “The first manifestations of play by a child do not differ much from those of a kitten. But as experience matures, activities are more and more regulated by an end to be attained; purpose becomes a thread that runs through a succession of acts; it converts them into a true series, a course of activity having a definite inception and steady movement toward a goal” (*AE*, 1934, p. 278). By comparing children’s play to that of kittens Dewey sees growth through experience and activities that are serialized by the choices made in development. Experiences regulated by activities teach us to attain our goals.

"Purpose" unites successive acts, converts them into courses of activities, while moving from a definitive inception toward a goal. This serialization of experiences and activities is central to effective curriculum formation.

22. "In playing with blocks the child builds a house or a tower. He becomes conscious of the meaning of his impulsions and acts by means of the difference made by them in objective materials. Past experiences more and more give meaning to what is done. The tower or fort that is to be constructed not only regulates the selection and arrangement of acts performed but is expressive of values of experience. Play, as an event is still immediate. But its content consists of a mediation of present materials by ideas drawn from past experience" (*AE*, 1934, p. 278). Children transform experience into meaningful outcomes, by building a tower, house, or fort out of blocks. Dewey's "playing with blocks" exemplifies children learning by doing. In putting the blocks together, the child recognizes, identifies and names his or her creations. Putting blocks together bridges cumulative experiences to developing and undertaking purposive intentions. Past experiences give action meaning. For the child, play becomes a means to construct and develop thought. In the block example, Dewey aligns the child's play activities in their serial formations as being analogous to the processes any age of artist employs.

23. "No one has ever watched a child intent in his play without being made aware of the complete merging of playfulness with seriousness" (*AE*, 1934, p. 279). For Dewey this observation represents an ideal state of art-making, in which the heart of play and the mind of work focus on a single activity.
24. "But children are not conscious of any opposition between play and necessary work" (*AE*, 1934, p. 280). Dewey stresses the simple premise at the core of *A as E*: the union of play and work is a natural unconscious process for children.
25. "From the first manifestation by a child of an impulse to draw up to the creations of Rembrandt, the self is created in the creation of objects, a creation that demands active adaptation to external materials, including a modification of the self so as to utilize and thereby overcome external necessities by incorporating them in an individual vision and expression" (*AE*, 1934, p. 282). This concept forms the foundation for the formation of art-based curriculum: Art-making is a self-creating act. Individuals create themselves, their understanding of themselves, through the creative processes and manifestations of what is defined as art. Dewey's declaration that art is an impulse for the child places art-making at the core of each individual's humanity. Dewey depicts children's desire to make art as the clear starting point of the human endeavor with Rembrandt's work held up as its highest achievement. The implicit adaptations an individual makes while creating a work of art is inherent in the very processes of art-making, and thus become

central to defining the individual. This passage highlights the artist's action to external and internal thoughts. The manifestation of ideas is the primary human endeavor. Developing one's ideas into "vision and expression" is central to creating art.

26. Dewey's last reference to children is in a discussion of the critic. The emphasis is on the critic and not the child, although the child serves his analogy. "The critic is really judging, not measuring physical fact. He is concerned with something individual, not comparative – as is all measurement. His subject matter is qualitative, not quantitative. There is no external and public thing defined by law to the same for all transactions that can be physically applied. The child who can use a yard-stick can measure as well as the most experienced and mature person, if he can handle the stick, since measuring is not judgment but is a physical operation performed for the sake of determining value in exchange or in behalf of some further physical operation – as a carpenter measures the boards with which he builds. The same cannot be said of judgment of the value of an idea or the value of a work of art" (*AE*, 1934, p. 307). Even a child can make a quantitative judgment. Dewey's point relates to his other passages about children in that he believes the child does not separate her or himself from what they experience. Thus the child does not separate or distance her or himself when rendering judgments.

*Summation of Dewey's References to Children*

The 26 passages above list all of the references to children by Dewey's *Art As Experience* that I have found*. Dewey's four main points about children and art can be central in designing art-based curriculum. For Dewey complete experiences are inceptive because they are "woven as strands into an activity that calls the whole self into play" (*AE*, 1934, p. 2). Dewey's compelling rationale for art-based curriculum is his declaration that although separating activities may make them more efficient, this separating or isolating activities from one another "are pretty much the source and cause of all further errors in the interpretation of experiences" (p. 58). Art becomes the uniting activity that weaves the separate pursuits of the core curriculum into a complete experience and offers the child the opportunity to cohesively understand their experience.

Dewey illustrates the mind developing through "playing with blocks" (*AE*, 1934, p. 278). This is an example of the possibility of mentally developing content for future creations through "mediation of present materials by ideas drawn from past experience" that are "more and more regulated by an end to be attained" (p. 278). The mind learns through combining experiences that broaden the scope of future undertakings. People learn through the processes employed in making art. Coupling this thought with the previous one we can propose a curriculum model in which

* See previous note.

cumulative experiences are sequential and additive in building to unite and encompass the whole of our educational goals.

In the twenty-fifth reference, the quotation of page 282, Dewey makes two phenomenal pronouncements: (1) that art is an innate impulse within the child and (2) Dewey's most compelling thought about art: that an indivdiual creates themself through art-making. "Active adaptations to external materials" modify and create an individual's "vision and expression" (*AE*, 1934, p. 282). In the process of creation individuals are transformed.

To summarize Dewey's references to children from *A as E* we find the following: Experience begins with the infant in expressive acts (*AE*, 1934, p. 61). The young child, lacking the background to grasp the difference between "undergoing and doing" (p. 44), learns to control the responses of others (p. 62) to obtain desired consequences (p. 62). A teacher, or guide like Grandma, shares experiences for future acts (p. 240) thus influencing the child's artistic choices (p. 113) that she or he will recreate to make art (p. 126). Fully engaging the child in activities merges past experiences with "present conditions" (p. 71) so that there is a "marriage of past values and present incidents" (p. 71). For the adult, letting go of self-consciousness (p. 257) returns one to "happy childhood" (p. 72) and the natural state of "amazing interest in the world" (p. 125). The "complete unison" (p. 72) is accomplished by uniting "intensity and extension" (p. 181). Children do not consciously separate work and play (p. 280). The "complete merging of playfulness with seriousness" (p. 279) is

created by the mind in purposeful action when the "idea and act are completely fused" (p. 278).

Throughout *A as E* Dewey develops, defines and applies his ideas about the artist's and the viewer's relationship to the art object. These ideas embody the spirit of children during their art-making, however the quotations above include *A as E*'s only specific application of his philosophy to children. In reading and contemplating *A as E* one not only gains insights into the nature of children, but also to the key place of art in their intellectual development. In the next chapter we will explore 50 other passages to the consideration of children and their relationship to art-making.

# CHAPTER IX:

# FIFTY QUOTATIONS FROM *ART AS EXPERIENCE*

# APPLIED TO CHILDREN AND ART-MAKING

If Dewey's ideas in *Art as Experience* are directed specifically to children they enhance an understanding of the positive benefits art can offer as an essential means to the conceptual development of young minds. Although Dewey does not direct *A as E* toward children, the book, taken as a whole, presents a compelling rationale for establishing art-based curriculum.

Most often Dewey distinguishes the child's experience from the adult's experience by observing that the child completely immerses in art-making without perceiving any separation between work and play. This harmony in the concentration of a focused mind is one of art's greatest gifts, and is a condition that seems readily accessible to children. Beyond noting children's instinctual willingness to dedicate themselves to their art-making, Dewey presents children in *A as E* as representing the uninitiated, the passive, the unconscious observers, or innate doers oblivious to their activities, without real concern of the results beyond the experience of the enjoyment of the art-making itself.

Dewey proposes that one achieves "the vivid consciousness of esthetic experience" (*AE,* Dewey, 1934, p. 261) while making art and that this is the natural state of children fully engaged, outwardly manifesting, their intellectual processes while they make art. The total unity of mind and body, thought and projection, work

and play, that is the child's experience in the flow of unconscious paint forming interpretations of their dreams seems central to Dewey's argument. Children embody the philosophy of *A as E* as they engage themselves in the creation of art through directed activities.

Within art-making, young artists can read their most personal and specific thoughts. For teachers, children's artwork provides opportunities to make the curriculum goals relevant to the individual. Educators' prime directive is to motivate; art, the product of inspiration, is the teacher's aesthetic tool. Recognizing that art inspires and motivates children, art should be at the heart of our pedagogy.

*Art As Experience* continues to draw readers, even though Dewey's writing style is often elusive, occasionally convoluted, or just difficult to read with confidence of a clear comprehension of his specific meaning. But Dewey's stylistic nuances may be the very quality that allows the book to function as the readers' personal Rosetta stone as the reader forms their own interpretations of the Dewey's ideas. I taught kindergarten, now I teach painting and art education to future teachers at a university. Thus, I read Dewey —applying his ideas to the child's art-making processes— both from the child's standpoint as personal expression, as well as recognizing the opportunities art offers the relationship between teaching and learning from a teacher's perspective.

If *A as E* is examined with children in mind, the thoughts, observations and deductions of the following fifty passages are particularly relevant to children's

experiences as art-makers and learners. If these passages are coupled with the quotations from chapter VIII they could become a dynamic foundation on which an art-based curriculum could be forged.

1. On the first page Dewey articulates his most poetic metaphor in all of *A as E*: "Mountain peaks do not float unsupported; they do not even just rest upon the earth. They are the earth in one of its manifest operations" (*AE*, 1934, p. 3). This metaphor applies directly to early childhood education if the mountain peaks are recognized as the experiences growing directly from children's endeavors in the arts, as makers, sharers and appreciators.

2. "The future is not ominous but a promise; it surrounds us . . . it consists of possibilities that are felt as a possession of what is now and here . . . . But all too often we exist in apprehensions . . . . Only when the past ceases to trouble . . . is a being fully alive. Art celebrates . . . the moments in which the past reinforces the present and in which the future is a quickening of what now is" (*AE*, 1934, p. 18). The presentation of the past, present and future and his diagnosis of an adult individual's relationship to art necessarily implies Dewey's view that an individual's childhood experience in art is of great value and significance for the entire life of all individuals.

3. "A painter [child] must consciously undergo the effect of every brush stroke . . . in relations to the whole . . . to apprehend such relations is to think, and is one of the most exacting modes of thought" (*AE*, 1934, p. 45). When children paint they experience the essence of what adults experience as painters. If one substitutes

the word "child" for the word "painter," how beautifully this passage expresses the child and her or his relationship to painting. This quotation identifies essentially how humans learn to use their minds, both conceptualizing and interpreting information within and from a two-dimensional format; Dewey characterizes the relationship of thinking and painting as one of the "the most exacting modes of thought" (*AE*, 1934, p. 45). Painting expressively manifests thought. The interpretation of that expression determines the next action. Painting is a process of actualizing mental projections based on trust, belief, desire, and the willingness to commit oneself.

4. "The doing or making is artistic when the perceived result is of such a nature that *its* qualities *as perceived* have controlled the question of production" (*AE,* 1934, p. 48). Undeniably, one major aspect of art-making is as a strategy for problem solving. The artist sets up questions of production that define the work. For children, working through self-determined activities enables them to discover and experience the affirmation of self-satisfaction as a source of great joy. The child can develop a strong sense of positive self-efficacy within the process of defining problems, finding solutions, and declaring them. A table with five-year-olds painting exemplifies Dewey's definition.

5. "The act of producing that is directed by intent to produce something that is enjoyed in the immediate experience of perceiving has qualities that a spontaneous or uncontrolled activity does not have" (*AE*, 1934, p. 48). The creations of children may spring from spontaneous projects or from directed assignments or suggestions.

Dewey's choice of "enjoyment" as a defining quality of the experience in painting is, of course, a child's first concern. "Enjoyment" is the essential quality that engages a child. The unspoken question of children to all endeavors: "Is it fun?" Dewey's desire to isolate "spontaneous and uncontrolled activity" might seem to exclude much of children's art-making. Children most often do make art in spontaneous and immediate acts, and though they are controlling materials, children are not necessarily working toward controlled results. Dewey's banishment of "spontaneous and uncontrolled activity" by extension would exclude much abstract and expressionist art, especially if the processes were not "directed by intent." Often the intent is discovered in the application of the paint itself; this is especially true of children. To separate the art of children or any abstractionists would mean that the act of painting was something other than directed thought. The youngest child's finger paintings, Jackson Pollock freeing paint from the definitive mark of the brush, the Color Field movement, as well as the most avant-garde renditions of paint in action, all must be defined as thought-directed activities to avoid a conflict with Dewey's definition. Painting is an act of directed thought. For the child painting is an act of inquiry, Part of the joy experienced in art-making is the satisfaction of problem solving through projecting one's thoughts within an act of expressive creation.

6. "The artist embodies in himself the attitude of the perceiver while he works" (*AE*, 1934, p. 48). The joy children exude when sharing their art also teaches empathy, fundamental to discern how others think, understand and respond. The pride

and pleasure a child expresses when her or his work is displayed on the school wall, or on the home refrigerator door proves the child's belief in the viewer. In some cases the openness of a work of art may elicit greater participation from the viewer, allowing them to define their own meanings and experiences through the artwork. Observe a room of children painting, then sharing their art: the processes of painting and viewing both include the other individuals. When children make art near others making art their individual work becomes part of a collective effort. For the child working alongside other children, art usually becomes an encompassing, inclusive, social experience.

7. "The esthetic experience –in its limited sense– is thus seen to be inherently connected with the experience of making" (*AE*, 1934, p. 49). For children, painting is a direct-thought activity, in which the results matter little and all their attention is focused on "the experience of making." The enjoyment of the "esthetic experience" reinforces the act of making and engaging in direct action.

8. "Nor without resistance from surroundings would the self become aware of itself" (*AE*, 1934, p. 59). What makes an adult self-aware may be inconsequential to a child and pose no barrier to overcome. Taking Dewey's "resistance from surroundings" very broadly includes everything from weather conditions, the hardness of the water, time restraints, responses from others, etc. The lack of self-consciousness in making art —so true of children as artists— is a core principle in Dewey's conception of art as experience. The lack of self-consciousness is most

admirable, and one of the most enviable aspects of the child's experience of art-making.

9. "When the natural and the cultivated blend in one, acts of social intercourse are works of art" (*AE*, 1934, p. 63). If one replaced the word "intercourse" with "interchange" this would be a perfect statement of the social dimension that is achievable in the classroom through art activities. Art in a classroom is naturally and irresistibly social.

10. "Many a person is unhappy, tortured within, because he has at command no art of expressive action" (*AE*, 1934, p. 65). No other justification for art-centered education should be necessary. Including art for children is so crucial in forming the adults they will become. The satisfaction and happiness, that children derive in art-making establishes artistic skills, patterns and expression to nurture them and creates an outlet that they can revisit for their entire lives. More essential and fundamental to our development is the patterns of thought developed within allowing oneself to pursue one's perceptions and predilections. Image creating from the mind's synapse to a projection manifested on the page is directed by intuition and establishes a process of self-directed satisfaction.

An archetype of a high school student who is tormented by perceived inflections of disappointment and self-defined failures to achieve success could be well served by having an art outlet to explore his or her thoughts and express feelings in a form of self creating communication. What parent, teacher, would not appreciate

the teenager's attempt to reach out, knowing that the only way to truly understand the artwork was to ask open, honest, questions and listen. Art programs fostering artistic development could help curtail the dropout rate, as well as expanding self-esteem and enhance self-determined learners. The expression in artwork, no matter how seemingly remote or obscure, is an act of communication. Art is an opening of channels by which people connect.

11. " . . . Prior experience[s] are stirred into action in fresh desires, impulsions and images. These proceed from the subconscious, not cold or in shapes that are identified with particulars of the past, not in chunks and lumps, but fused in the fire of internal commotion. They do not seem to come from the self, because they issue from a self not consciously known" (*AE*, 1934, p. 65-66). Consider this idea in relation to children's readiness to translate their experiences, real and imagined, experienced and dreamed, through art-making. Dewey is either referring to the collective unconscious with "do not seem to come from the self" or, alluding to the deep reserves of the subconscious mind that brings up issues to confront, and resolve. Although, Dewey never explicitly refers to Freud or Jung outright in *A as E* he seems to be acknowledging both here.

12. " . . . The artist 'does the deed that breeds' the emotion" (*AE*, 1934, p. 67). What children express within their art-making often responds directly to internal thoughts and emotions fused with outward influences and suggestions. A child's work

is far more engaged with internal imagery of feelings and relationships than it is based on direct visual observation of the action around them.

13. “Without emotion, there may be craftsmanship, but not art;” (*AE*, 1934, p. 69). An art “without emotion” contrasts clearly with the connections that children display in the process of artistic creation. Perhaps Dewey was distinguishing work done strictly or primarily for commerce from fine or self-determined creative art.

14. “In the degree in which art exercises its office, it is also a remaking of the experience of the community in the direction of greater order and unity” (*AE*, 1934, p. 81). The feeling of connectedness to a community is being created through art in every classroom where children endeavor together in the creation of a group art activity, such as a mural of an experience they shared, be it a trip to the zoo, shared literature or a cultural event. Sharing art creates a common experience and may act to define or create a group identity.

15. “Memories, not necessarily conscious but retentions that have been organically incorporated in the very structure of the self, feed present observation” (*AE*, 1934, p. 89). The infusion of memories, dreams, feelings, and observations serve as the rich prime source of all art-making especially for children.

16. “Art throws off the covers that hide the expressiveness of experienced things; it quickens us from the slackness of routine and enables us to forget ourselves by finding ourselves in the delight of experiencing the world about us in its varied qualities and forms” (*AE*, 1934, p. 104). If the statement were read in the context of

children in the classroom it would become the basis of an all encompassing justification and rationale for art-based education. The child painting or cutting shapes and gluing them into collages is immersed "in the delight of experiencing the world about us in its varied qualities and forms" and "quickened" from "the slackness of routine." Through the immediacy of making art the student becomes ready to focus on any task presented as a challenging interest that's reward will be in the experience itself as well as the knowledge gained.

17. "It is a developing process. As we have already seen, the artist finds where he is going because of what he has previously done; that is, the original excitation and stir of some contact with the world undergo successive transformation" (*AE*, 1934, p. 111). If "A child and her or his art is . . ." replaced "It" the passage forms one of the definitive statements of the child's relationship with art-making. Dewey's repeated focus on initial experiences, on the "original excitation," emphasizes how paramount he understood the experiences of childhood are to the development of the individual and as sources for future "successive transformation." Art actively transforms experiences of the self.

18. "Meanings, having their source in past experience, are means by which the particular organization that marks a given picture is effected" (*AE*, 1934, p. 118). Perhaps all experience revisits childhood feelings and experiences. The actions of individuals in art-making are recreations of endeavors and enterprises that enable the on-going nature of self-discovery and self-revelation.

19. “In art, as in nature and in life, relations are modes of interaction” (*AE*, 1934, p. 134). This statement is true for all the ages of the human experience. An art-based curriculum is centered on how the various subjects interact and are interconnected.

20. “Underneath the rhythm of every art and of every work of art there lies, as a substratum in the depths of the subconsciousness, the basic pattern of the relations of the live creature to his environment” (*AE*, 1934, p. 150). The interplay of foundational experiences on forming the individual psyche, personality, and certainly one’s relationship with art and art-making are drawn from deep in the childhood subconscious. Kindergarteners who have a daily practice of coming from naptime to a circle to tell their dreams to each other and then paint them are establishing a dialogue within themselves to explore their deepest understandings of what their own mind is focused on.

21. “There is something mystical associated with the word intuition, and any experience becomes mystical in the degree in which the sense, the feeling, of the unlimited envelope becomes intense – as it may do in experience of an object of art” (*AE*, 1934, p. 193). The power of intuitive learning is linked directly to the overall processes of thinking that is learned in childhood. The willingness to project thought, to commit to an hypothesis, to extend one’s convictions through the creative act of art-making are all based on intuitive constructions that were formed when the individual was very young. Thus, childhood reflection serves as the basis of

experiential thought. Trusting one's own intuition is a process of extending one's thoughts. Making art as a child reinforces the constructs of intuition.

22. A long quotation of John Marin's ends with: "Art product is a village in itself." This saying, ascribed to ancient African folklore, holds contemporary cultural currency as Senator Clinton's *It Takes a Village* substantiates. Dewey defines, "These identities are the parts that are themselves individual wholes in the substance of the work of art." The village is curriculum considered as a whole from the sum of the core subjects brought together through art activities. Dewey concludes his village analogy with the recognition of the individualization of the parts, "In great art, there is no limit set to the individualization of parts with parts" (*AE*, 1934, p. 204). Think of Dewey's statements in relation to the conceptual development of an individual child's mind as she or he sits with other children all engaged in painting their ideas and the sharing of their own and each other's expressions. Here the concept of the village and parts adding together to create a new entity, a whole, a community, is a revealing metaphor for the place of art within an individual's mental framework, as well as within the group's collective experience. Sharing their creations builds greater understanding of themselves and of each other. As a village a classroom grows as the expressions of the individual students are combined and reassembled.

23. "Works of art express space as opportunity for movement and action" (*AE*, 1934, p. 209). Again, visualize children at the table painting with watercolors. If the "opportunity" for thought is seen as the "movement and action" with children's

creations as the "space," the potential for understanding the child can be seen more fully as the participants engage together in an intellectual endeavor. Sharing art fosters growth for each individual as well as for the group's combined collective development.

24. "An experience is a product, one might almost say a by-product, of continuous and cumulative interaction of an organic self with the world" (*AE*, 1934, p. 220). The experience of a group of children engaged in "continuous and cumulative interaction" illuminates what can gained in social and mental growth if the children are recognized as the true "organic self."

25. "There is no experience in which the human contribution is not a factor in determining what actually happens" (*AE*, 1934, p. 246). If this realization is applied to education of the child in the classroom one can visualize how each individual member in the collective empowers the actions of the whole class. Each child's expression becomes an active factor that every other class member must consider as each person pursues and develops individual thoughts and actions.

26. "First hostile reactions to a new mode in an art are usually due to unwillingness to perform some needed disassociation" (*AE*, 1934, p. 250). To embrace the new understanding inherently may mean distancing oneself from past entrenchment by allowing limitations from the past to fall away. Instilling such understandings in the child could create anticipation for new experiences rather than a sense of apprehension or dread when they are presented with new forms to consider.

27. “Our needs are drafts drawn upon the environment, at first blindly, then with conscious interest and attention. To be satisfied, they must intercept energy from surrounding things that absorb what they lay hold of” (*AE*, 1934, p. 255). Children within their art-making work through their own difficulties, even with the most abstract creations. The child finds an outlet satisfying to her or himself through their artistic expression within the pressures and expectations for conformity.

28. “Perception that occurs for its own sake is full realization of all the elements of our psychological being” (*AE*, 1934, p. 256). Applied to children, this would mean that through artistic creation a child finds a path to self-realization that brings their conceptual and emotional sensations into their psychological make-up.

29. “There is always some measure of adventure in the meeting of mind and universe, and this adventure is, in its measure, imagination” (*AE*, 1934, p. 267). Art is the work of the imagination. The human quest for adventure can be channeled fruitfully into exploring and experimenting with art materials; the actualized conceptualization of making art can satisfy the “adventure need” for the child.

30. “One form of the theory that art is play attributes play to the existence of a surplus of energy in the organism demanding outlet” (*AE*, 1934, p. 279). For the classroom teacher Dewey’s definition of art as play readily offers art as an unbridled outlet. By using art as a positive and directed activity for harnessing children’s energy the teacher can expand educational opportunities. Play is the natural life of a child. Children are outdoor beings, too often confined within the classroom walls, instructed

to be still and quiet. Art channels their exuberance into directed activities through which they learn to concentrate and develop abilities for creative thinking.

31. " . . . Between play and work, spontaneity and necessity, freedom and law. For art is the fusion in one experience of the pressure upon the self of necessary conditions and the spontaneity and novelty of individuality. Individuality itself is originally a potentiality and is realized only in interaction with surrounding conditions" (*AE*, 1934, p. 281). Dewey equates individuality as focusing play, spontaneity and freedom, contrasted and in juxtaposition with work, necessity and law. The individual's personality is a fusion of the conditions necessary and essential in making art. Art-making integrates "play and work, spontaneity and necessity, freedom and law."

32. As a justification for art in the classroom, this passage expresses the need universally: "The more deep-seated it is in the doing and undergoing that form experience, the more general or common it is. We live in the same world; that aspect of nature is common to all. There are impulsions and needs that are common to humanity. The 'universal' is not something metaphysically anterior to all experience but is *a way in which things function* in experience as a bond of union among particular events and scenes" (*AE*, 1934, p. 286). Art is the unifying activity of experience. While making art the child is in that deep-seated state of "doing and undergoing" of thought and action that creates a bonding union for the processes of learning. The "impulsions and needs" together fuse the experience of an "event or

scene" into the child's formative understandings and help comprise and develop the child's conceptualization of the universal.

33. "Now art is the most effective mode of communication that exists" (*AE*, 1934, p. 286). If Dewey is given credence then this thought becomes the heart of pedagogy and employs children's experience in art "the incomparable means of instruction" (*AE*, 1934, p. 347).

34. "Knowledge is instrumental to the enrichment of immediate experience through the control over action that it exercises" (*AE*, 1934, p. 290). Art is an act of inspiration from which all true learning finds its ignition switch. Art accomplishes this feat of learning and instruction through the "enrichment of immediate experience" as the child takes direct control over an action-based media, such as paint. Past experience is the instrumental knowledge that is engaged and exercised to culminate new experiences into a basis for learning and for the creation of new knowledge.

35. " . . . The work of art is the impregnation of sensuous material with imaginative values . . ." (*AE*, 1934, p. 293). While "impregnation" is an infrequent word in the classrooms of younger children, Dewey's meaning —the engagement of the senses with the values of the individual's imagination— represents one of his finest definitions of art. Combining the materials with the senses and imagination charts one of the main avenues to inspiration. Inspiration triggers motivation, which spurs engagement and creates an active learning environment even inside the dull

toned institutional walls and under the perforated ceiling of pattern holes within which children are too often confined, nearly detached from her or his natural state as a creature "amazingly interested in the world in which it found itself" (p. 125).

36. "A judgment as an act of controlled inquiry demands a rich background and a disciplined insight" (*AE*, 1934, p. 300). All engagement in art making is proactive. At the essence of the doing is a process of creating problems and solutions to those problems through direct action. For the child, art-making is decisive and definitive because by its very nature it demands action. The judgments made while creating a work of art are of an extended inquiry that combines previous experience and disciplined insight. Art actualizes creative thought through direct action.

37. "The beginning of a new idea, terminating perhaps in an elaborate judgment following upon extensive inquiry, is an impression, even in the case of a scientific man or philosopher" (*AE*, 1934, pp. 304 – 305). Thinking of art as a process that begins by creating an impression, Dewey aligns art-making with the same process of scientific and philosophical inquiry. Recognizing art as the encompassing activity of the various intellectual pursuits and disciplines, Dewey's ideas form the basis for art-centered curriculum.

38. "The subject-matter is charged with meanings that issue from intercourse with a common world" (*AE*, 1934, p. 306). The first definition for the word "Intercourse," is "communication," which clearly is Dewey's intention as it was in quotation IX 9. This is comparable to his use of "impregnation" in passage IX 35.

Here Dewey seems to be using the word in the sense of "to imbue" or "permeate thoroughly." This highlights the same problem that suggested changing the word "organ" in my original title to "means." To avoid a potential misreading from Dewey's double-entendres, for the intended conversation of the application of the philosophy to children and their curriculum needs, again words have to be substituted to avoid the possibility of guiding the reader into a metaphoric misunderstanding.

The passage speaks of subject-matter as being empowered with meaning through connecting actual experiences with the common world. In the brain, coursing with neurons, the creation of art and its metaphoric modes unite physics with the personal realities of the world. Through sharing insight and experience children establish a common language and develop the connections that defines them as a classroom group.

39. "Learning must be the fuel of warmth of interest" (*AE,* 1934, p. 31). People learn by focusing the mind; art personalizes what is learned. For the young child, at a pre-reading level, her or his own artwork is the paper or object that commands the greatest concentration. Within the processes of art-making children learn to focus their minds and direct their thoughts to the two-dimensional page or screen.

40. "The moral function of art itself is to remove prejudice, do away with the scales that keep the eye from seeing, tear away the veils due to wont and custom, perfect the power to perceive" (*AE*, 1934, p. 325). The central idea of this quotation

has far-reaching implications in curriculum design. Dewey believes art has a moral function of enabling the artist and perceiver to transcend "wont and custom." It is heartening that in 1934 Dewey would define the moral function of art to be to "remove prejudice." In an art-based curriculum, Social Studies is a likely discipline through which the commonality, as well as the shared uniqueness of all individuals, can be recognized as universally of the same source with the same concerns as the child's own. Art offers a full spectrum of cultures and a range of historic timeframes that can fill the classroom with experiences for students to discover in an exploration of the work of other art-makers.

41. "We lay hold of the full import of a work of art only as we go through in our own vital processes the processes the artist went through in producing the work" (*AE*, 1934, p. 325). Developing empathy is crucial in shaping one's ability to see the world through the eyes of others. Children using various media of art-making learn the processes of production, gaining insight into the nature and construction of what they will encounter. Experimenting and working in art creates foundational experiences so the child may develop the ability to envision how others' create their work. In the process the children learn to conceptualize their intentions for future actions.

42. "Like the individuality of the person from whom a work of art issues, this collective individuality leaves its indelible imprint upon the art that is produced" (*AE*, 1934, p. 330). Historically, the art produced defines a culture and specific time

periods. This "indelible imprint" of the art produced by a people in a specific location at a specified time may be applied directly to children in a classroom. Their artwork chronicles and defines the experience for the class members' progress, individually and as a group.

43. "But experience is a matter of the interaction of the artistic product with the self . . . It changes with the same person at different times as he brings something different to a work" (*AE*, 1934, p. 331). One of the phenomenal dimensions of art is in documenting an individual's growth as she or he continues to develop their art. For the child an evolving understanding of a work of art —her or his own or others— reassures and encourages them, while offering them philosophical insight. A group of five-year-olds sharing and discussing their watercolors easily extend their questioning to philosophical inquiries, speculation about the nature of God, the source and meaning of dreams, the origins and formation myths, the relationship of the past to the future, etc. In sharing their work, children's individual and collective understanding of the artwork's meaning develops and changes through the shared exploration. A group's understanding is uniquely comprised from the observations and feelings of the individuals in combination with each other and their sharing.

44. "But in recent decades, beginning in the nineties [1890s] the influence of the arts of distant cultures has entered intrinsically into artistic creation" (*AE*, 1934, p. 333). Dewey recognizes the West's engagement with world culture through artistic responses to art from different times as well as recognizing the interconnections of

various civilizations. Standing at the threshold of modernism, Dewey looks forward and sees an emerging development of a culturally inclusive collaboration of artistic influences spurring creativity and redefining culture.

45. "Only an expansion of experience that absorbs into itself the values experienced because of life-attitudes, other than those resulting from our own human environment, dissolves the effect of discontinuity" (*AE*, 1934, p. 336). Here Dewey ascribes one of post-modernism's postulates to the art experience: understanding other's experiences can bridge cultures, dissolving the effects of discontinuity. If Dewey's vision for mankind is applied to children's curriculum I believe one will discover a means to harmonize the various needs and directives of the school experience. Cultural programs that allow children from a local schoolroom to exchange artwork with children from classrooms around the world are active, growing in scope and developing a personal connection where children share their aesthetic philosophies.

46. "The values that lead to production and intelligent enjoyment of art have to be incorporated into the system of social relationships" (*AE*, 1934, p. 344). Incorporating social learning is a key strategy in art-based curriculum.

47. The third to last page, four paragraphs from the end of the book, Dewey pronounces his seminal statement, the centralizing concept of art in education. Dewey's pronouncement on page 347 was discussed in chapter I. Analyzing the

sentence as four lines should help us decipher one of Dewey's most difficult and insightful offerings:

"It is by way of communication that art becomes the incomparable organ of instruction, but the way is so remote from that usually associated with the idea of education, it is a way that lifts art so far above what we are accustomed to think of as instruction, that we are repelled by any suggestion of teaching and learning in connection with art."

Poetically, Dewey's first line of the "incomparable" quality of art is in the rising voice. Followed by, the "remoteness" to education in the dropping voice in the second line, and the "lifts above" is again in the rising voice in the third line. The forth line is back to the dropping voice with "repelled by" the suggestion of art in connection to teaching. The meaning of the sentence is a roller coaster ride of up, down, up, down. This structure adds to the convoluted nature of the meaning that is ultimately claiming art as "the incomparable organ of instruction" and is the basis for my projecting of Dewey as an under-realized proponent of art-based curriculum. Here Dewey states his conviction that the whole text of *Art As Experience* leads to; one also may understand the statement as the culmination of Dewey's career as an educator. Quite clearly Dewey is emphasizing the central place of art in education. If the structure of Dewey's sentence is unraveled, he is saying: Art is the incomparable means of instruction.

48. The sentence following continues Dewey's assessment: "But our revolt is in fact a reflection upon education that proceeds by methods so literal as to exclude the imagination and one not touching the desires and emotions of men" (*AE*, 1934, p. 347). Dewey aligns himself with the idea of art-centered education being "our revolt" against an education system that "excludes the imagination and one not touching the desires and emotions." If the work "children" were substituted for "men" Dewey's assessment of why education fails children, as well as students of all ages, would be clarified. Dewey's consensus is that the failure springs from excluding the imagination. For the child, imagination is her/his art form. Through the imagination the child processes all experience as well as inventing parallel universes from projected experiences. All education that seeks to connect with an individual should harness media to express the learner's thoughts. Art education is invaluable because art curriculum is based on the inclusion of the "imagination, desires and emotions." The sentence ascribes the very viable image of a revolution being required to redirect educational practices. If Dewey's histrionics of a revolution are removed then the thought he is offering could be stated as: We will have to create a change in our educational methodology if we are to embrace the inclusion of the imagination in our teaching and learning and truly inspire the students through active participation.

49. "Imagination is the chief instrument of the good. It is more or less a commonplace to say that a person's ideas and treatment of his fellows are dependent upon his power to put himself imaginatively in their place. But the primacy of the

imagination extends far beyond the scope of direct personal relationships. Except where 'ideal' is used in conventional deference or as a name for a sentimental reverie, the ideal factors in every moral outlook and human loyalty are imaginative" (*AE*, 1934, p. 348). Dewey, paraphrasing Shelly, chooses the "imagination" to guide classroom management, as well to successfully govern interpersonal and international affairs. The ability to explore and project through imaginative constructions and reconstructions is central to the understanding of other's lives and thoughts.

50. "The union that is presented in perception persists in the remaking of impulsion and thought. The first intimations of wide and large redirections of desire and purpose are of necessity imaginative. Art is a mode of prediction not found in charts and statistics, and it insinuates possibilities of human relations not to be found in rule and precept, admonition and administration" (*AE*, 1934, p. 349). Dewey is emphasizing that to fundamentally change overriding pedagogy, educators must realize that art is the central core of "our revolt" if true educational reform is desired.

In future administrations perhaps educational systems will be established in which inquiry leads students, not just to master knowledge and skills of a quantitatively testable curriculum, but will deliver to students the means and opportunities to expand the realms of their own minds' endeavors and experiences. Art includes the imagination, and "the desires and emotions of men." "The incomparable organ of instruction" is deployed by the fusion and interplay of the brain and heart. The brain and heart, when engaged together create the defining quality of art.

*Summation of the Isolated Passages from* A as E

Children, in terms of their experiences and feelings, are not less consequential than adults, especially in relation to art. Childhood is not an experience separate from the experience of adulthood, but an integral part of the life experience.

One of the truly exceptional gifts of *Art As Experience* is realized when Dewey's thoughts are applied to children involved in art-making. The interaction between the child and her or his art can reveal much to us about the intellectual development of children.

*Summation of Quotations Not Directed Specifically to Children*

Bringing these fifty quotations together in a cohesive statement of Dewey's words lays out powerful reasons for an art-based curriculum. These passages from *Art as Experience* could be arranged in many configurations. Consider the following arrangement, beginning with the first quotation from the book that poetically captures Dewey's thoughts as an encapsulation of the whole philosophy of *A as E*: "Mountain peaks do not float unsupported; they do not even just rest upon the earth. They are the earth in one of its manifest operations" (*AE*, 1934, p. 3).

To succeed, the forming of elementary curriculum must be treated as an organic whole in which the parts of the core curriculum are fused together (*AE*, 1934, p. 3). Our students' futures must promise a merging the possibilities of the future with their past experiences by relating all experience to a consideration of the present (p. 18).

Impulsions from the subconscious (*AE*, 1934, pp. 65-66), interacting with the environment (p. 150) stir our prior experiences into action and are fully realized within the elements of our psychological being (p. 256). Children grasp the full importance of a process, by exploring and participating in the process (p. 325). Children "delight in the experiencing of the world" (p. 104) and discover themselves (p. 67) in expressive acts (p. 65). The experience of learning is self-actualizing, so educational methodology must remain fluid as the students develop (p. 331). People learn by embracing challenging resistances (p. 49) in a continuous and cumulative (p. 220) process that requires one to suspend their preconceptions (p. 250) as memories are incorporated with observations in the present moment (p. 89).

The aesthetic experience is primarily one of problem creating and problem solving in which the artist (*AE*, 1934, p. 48) uses judgment and insight (p. 300) to transform the past and the present (p. 111) by expressing the imaginative values of materials and forms (p. 293). Interest in the experience of creating fuels learning (p. 310). Through movement and action (p. 209) with the everyday world (p. 306) new ideas gain meaning (pp. 304-305). Meaning springs from the past (p. 111) that then is enriched with present and immediate knowledge (p. 290).

When play and work, spontaneity and necessity, freedom and law are fused; the individual realizes her or his potential in these interactions (*AE*, 1934, p. 281). Play is energy demanding a creative outlet (p. 279). When children focus their energy intensely on a particular act of doing, they invoke the whole experience and this process "is one of the most exacting modes of thought" (p. 45). The imagination may

serve as a mode of prediction, (p. 349) combining the limitless feelings of intuition (p. 193) with the impulsion from the surrounding environment (p. 255) as the imagination pulls us into adventures (p. 267).

The creative works of the individuals in a classroom define the group and leave indelible imprints (*AE*, 1934, p. 330) when the art-works are incorporated into the intellectual enjoyment of their social relationships (p. 344). In the doing and undergoing of shared impulsions and needs, the experience bonds events and sensations (p. 286). The relationships formed in these modes of interaction (p. 134) are themselves works of art (p. 63).

Intrinsically, the arts of distant cultures are integrated into the artist's creations (p. 333). The artist's attitudes as well as the perceiver's are embodied in the work (p. 48) "dissolving the effects of discontinuity" (p. 336) and shaping the community "in the direction of greater order and unity" (p. 81). By inclusion and interaction art potentially removes prejudice (p. 325), as people experience the shared human condition (p. 246) and establish a shared community (p. 204).

Dewey perceived the imagination as the chief instrument of good (*AE*, 1934, p. 279). Exercising the imagination develops children's moral outlook and feelings of human loyalty. Dewey felt himself in a revolt against an educational system that systematically excluded the imagination, and did not deploy the experiences of art as the prime means of communication (p. 347).

*Encapsulation of Quotations from* A as E

*as Founding Principles for Art-based Curriculum*

The following summation is derived from combining the 26 quotations from chapter VIII that refer to children with the 50 quotations above that were considered with children in mind.

Experience begins in expressive acts (*AE*, 1934, p. 61) through which children learn to anticipate and control their responses (p. 62) to achieve desired consequences (p. 62). Those who share experiences influence a child's artistic choices (p. 113). These choices are recreated to make art (p. 126). As the child engages in activities she/he merges past experiences with "present conditions" (p. 71). If people can overcome their self-consciousness (p. 257), they can return to the natural state of "amazing interest in the world" (p. 125). By uniting (p. 72) work and play (p. 280) the mind creates an intensity in which the "idea and act are completely fused" (p. 278).

Interest fuels learning (*AE*, 1934, p. 310). When the mind focuses intensely in the act of art-making people invoke the whole experience and involve themselves "in one of the most exacting modes of thought" (p. 45). The imagination combines the limitless feelings of intuition (p. 193) with our surroundings and our creative interest (p. 255) to lead us into the great adventure (p. 267) of discovery. Creative problem solving develops new ideas that gain meaning (pp. 304-305) through an exploration of past experiences (p. 111), enriched with present and immediate knowledge (p.

290). The imagination is essential in developing the individual (p. 279) and making connections that establish community (p. 204).

"Complete experiences" are inceptive when they are engaged in an activity "that calls the whole self into play" (*AE*, 1934, p. 58). Separating activities may make them more efficient, but separation or isolating activities from one another "are pretty much the source and cause of all further errors in the interpretation of experiences" (p. 58). Art is the uniting activity that weaves the separate pursuits of the core subjects of the curriculum into a complete experience and cohesive understanding.

The mind creates connections and associations through experiences that combine with past experiences to broaden and inform future undertakings. Experiences are sequential and additive and should be guided to unite the whole of our educational goals (*AE*, 1934, p. 278). The "active adaptations to external materials" creates modifications within the self through which people create themselves in active processes (p. 282). People discover themselves and "delight in the experiencing of the world" (p. 104) through creating emotions (p. 67) in expressive acts. (p. 65) Learning is self-actualizing and changes as one develops (p. 331) through the processes employed in making art (p. 278). An individual's "vision and expression" (p. 282) are transformed in the process from an innate impulse to create art (p. 282).

The elementary curriculum needs to be seen as an organic whole in which all parts of the core curriculum are fused (*AE*, 1934, p. 1) as the future is celebrated and

reinforced by bringing all experience into the considerations of the present (p. 18). The future for our students is a promise that merges the possibilities of the present with their past experiences.

People grasp the full importance of a process through an exploration of and participation in the process (*AE*, 1934, p. 325). People learn by embracing challenging resistances (p. 49) and by being willing to disassociate their preconceptions (p. 250) as memories are incorporated into present observations (p. 89). One's prior experiences are stirred into action from impulsions from the subconscious (pp. 65-66) in interaction with the environment (p. 150). Experiences are continuous and cumulative (p. 220) and become fully realized in the perception of one's psychological awareness (p. 256).

The creative works of a classroom of individuals define the group and are incorporated into their shared intellectual enjoyment (*AE*, 1934, p. 344). Shared experiences bond events and scenes (p. 286) and are themselves works of art (p. 63). The attitudes of the artist and perceiver are embodied in (p. 48) the community (p. 81). In this process of inclusion and interaction art creates greater unity and order and has the potential to remove prejudice (p. 325). The arts of distant cultures (p. 333) help create a greater understanding and experience of the shared humanity of people throughout all time (p. 246). In teaching and learning art should be employed as the prime means of communication (p. 347).

# CHAPTER X:

# THOUGHTS ON CURRICULUM FORMATION:

# APPLYING DEWEY'S *ART AS EXPERIENCE*

# TO KINDERGARTEN THROUGH ELEMENTARY CURRICULUM

In this last chapter I will form some guidelines for an art-based curriculum from *Art as Experience* combined with Dewey's earlier writings. When *Art as Experience* is considered with the ultimate educational concern of preparing future generations of students and teachers, the book offers a philosophical foundation to guide educational reform.

## *Considering Dewey's Theory of Teaching*

In his article "John Dewey: His Aesthetics Considered as a Contemporary Theory in Teaching the Humanities," 1965, David Spitzer emphasizes two critical points about *A as E.* First, the book served as Dewey's "formulation of a general theory of integrated experiences with emphasis on instrumental values and the interaction of the organism with the environment." Second, the book "marked advance in the scientific direction" with its "thesis based on three postulates:" (a) art must consider the individual experience; (b) the integration of experience is a complex process, and (c) "time must be recognized as an important factor in the aesthetic process" (Spitzer, 1965, p. 8).

From these premises about the nature of experience, four principles that are essential to an effective, responsive art-based curriculum can be stated: (a) The

child's experiences are recognized and developed through their initial interactions with actual processes. (b) Isolated experiences must be connected to bring them to fruition. (c) Interrelating experiences is a psychological process engaging all aspects of the child's conceptions. (d) Timing significantly affects the presentation, sequence and assimilation of all learning materials and experiences.

Dewey believed art should not be, must not be, and cannot be separated from the human experience because art brings meaning to all activities. Dewey felt aesthetics was "grounded in a sociological and empirical approach" that is vital to enjoyment and to his educational philosophy (Spitzer, 1965, p. 8). The student's active participation is essential for growth and beats at the heart of a Deweyan philosophy of art-based curriculum. Art actively engages students to develop new meanings as essential experiences in living. Dewey said, "The real work of art is the building up of an integral experience out of the interaction of organic and environmental conditions and energies" and that by engaging their "natural impulses and tendencies," students will create designed and constructed expressions that constitute art as a "construction in time, not [as] an instantaneous emission" (*AE*, Dewey, 1934, pp. 64-65).

Dewey contended that education is detached from art and nature, and hampered by compartmentalized conceptions that segregate the various subject areas. He valued the inceptive moments: "Impulsions are the beginnings of complete experience because they proceed from need; from a hunger and demand that belongs

to the organism as a whole and that can be supplied only by instituting definite relations (active relations, interactions) with the environment" (p. 58). "Impulsion" may seem a strange choice of words, but Dewey is trying to engage the language, to vivify it, not invent a new one. "Impulsion" conjures an active, forward moving force, kinetically doing rather than passively listening or merely observing. Impulsion is contact and interacting through active engagement. "Impulsion" is a great choice of words when applied to the interaction of the child and all the world is composed of for him or her. Inceptive moments can create a lasting impact and connect disparaging ideas together into a concentric whole.

Spitzer reminds us "consciousness is an important concept that can be closely equated with Dewey's aesthetics" (Spitzer, 1965, p. 11). In *Experience and Nature* (1925) Dewey said, "In creative production, the external and physical world is more than a mere means or external condition of perceptions, ideas and emotions; it is subject-matter and sustainer of conscious activity . . . . the fact that consciousness is not a separate realm of being, but is the manifest quality of existence when nature is most free and most active" (*EN*, Dewey, 1958, p. 393). All elements of being come together in the instant. Dewey recognized that "an instantaneous experience is an impossibility, biologically and psychologically. An experience is a product, one might almost say a by-product, of continuous and cumulative interaction of an organic self with the world" (*AE,* 1934, p. 220). Spitzer sees *A as E* as "a significant, important foundation for an educational theory" (p. 12). Coupled with "learning by

doing," the philosophy of art as experience becomes Dewey's greatest contribution to developing an art-based curriculum.

### A as E's *Guiding Principles for Elementary Art Curriculum*

Chapter VII of this study cataloged Dewey's 26 specific references to children. Chapter VIII presented 50 other passages from *A as E* that could be productively applied to teaching children. The first six chapters explored Dewey's other writings and the influences that shaped his thinking about aesthetics, teaching and learning. By assembling the ideas from each of these areas, guidelines for the a kindergarten and elementary art curriculum can be developed.

Reexamining *Art as Experience* as a curriculum guide presents a clear challenge to American education to form a pedagogy that is responsive to the nature of children, flexible enough to engage their interests and imaginations, and integrate new knowledge and skills that will foster their innate intelligence and intuition for a lifetime. Twenty key Deweyan concepts from *A as E* may be utilized to form an effective philosophic guide to kindergarten and elementary teaching and support learning methods that can resound from kindergarten through college curriculums.

Dewey's initial premise in his early *The School and Society* (1900) was that an adult's interest is naturally focused on "the individual child, of our acquaintance, his normal physical development, his advance in ability to read, write, and figure, his growth in the knowledge of geography and history, improvement in manners, habits of promptness, order, and industry –it is from such standards as these that we judge

the work of the school" (*SS*, Dewey, 1990, p. 6). Perhaps aspects of this quotation sound archaic and antiquated, but these concerns still primarily guide how curriculum is developed. If all of Dewey's writings on education were read as a directive for curriculum formation, then his most important principles are to actively engage experiences within a unified pedagogy that develops a child's intuition, attitudes and skills with the goal to provide a learning matrix that could serve an individual for a lifetime.

### *Guidelines for a Deweyan Art-Based Curriculum*

Dewey's lifework as an educator was fulfilled in the philosophy he articulates in *Art as Experience. A as E* expanded the earlier promises of *S & S* and *C & C* by identifying art as the central unifying concept and activity of how people integrate experience to enhance the intuitive knowledge base. I have grouped the guidelines under the headings of Dewey's main principles for art-based learning.

#### *Enhanced Attention*

1. The Mind Learns through Active Experiences

Expression creates a deeper level of learning "with a fuller content of meaning" (*AE*, 1934, p. 72). Art releases energy, focuses and transforms that energy into constructive forms (*HNC*, Dewey, 1922, p. 163). The mind learns through combining experiences that involve the child's own "ideas, thoughts and spiritual rendering of things" (*SS,* p. 89). By using the "child's need of action, of expression, of desire to do something, to be constructive and creative, instead of simply passive

and conforming" (p. 80), a matrix can be forged to develop and gauge kindergarten and elementary curriculum. Art "directly liberates subsequent action and makes it more fruitful in a creation of more meanings and more perceptions" (*EN,* 1958, p. 371).

2. A Mind that is Free of Anxiety Learns Best.

When the mind is free from speculation (*AE*, 1934, p. 57) the ideas and actions can be completely fused (p. 278). When free from anxiety children can fulfill the promise of the future (p. 18). Anxiety closes the mind, denying the central axis of education. If schools are based on encouragement, curriculum activities will respond to "the mind [as] a growing affair" (*SS,* 1990, p. 102). The child's own needs and nature should guide our methods.

3. Embracing Challenges

Putting aside preconceptions and embracing challenges teaches children to incorporate their own memories into the actualities and their observations of the circumstances and opportunities of the present moment. Attaining knowledge is a cumulative process of creating continuous experiences. Challenges create opportunities for growth (*AE*, 1934, p. 59). "In art attention is given to practical questions of perspective, of proportion of spaces and masses, balance, effect of color combinations and contrasts" (*SS,* 1990, p. 110). All these concerns are elements of mathematics. By adapting shapes and geometrical forms the groundwork for mathematical constructs are created. "Thought, inquiry, and activity" are brought into

play as we pursue "technical and intellectual aims" (p. 115). Dewey credited Leonardo de Vinci as saying, "true knowledge begins with opinion" (*EN,* 1958, p. 155). "Science has been defined in terms of method of inquiry and testing" (*DE,* 1929, p. 223). In the face of seemingly daunting conundrums art approaches create a positive attitude as art-making engages the processes of problem solving.

4. Fusing Work and Play

Children do not consciously divide work and play (*AE*, 1934, p. 280), so the child intermingles playfulness with seriousness (p. 279). Artistic expression releases feelings that create happiness (p. 65). "The charm which the spontaneity of little children has for sympathetic observers is due to perception of this intellectual originality. The joy which children themselves experience is the joy of intellectual constructiveness –of creativeness" (*DE,* 1929, p.187). In creative expression children form their mental constructs and learn to interrelate new thoughts with existing ideas. "Play and art add fresh and deeper meanings to the usual activities of life" (*HNC,* 1922, p. 162). Through imagination children expand their art-making and play to create and connect life experiences. "For children spontaneity and liberation from external necessities permits an enhancement and vitality" (p. 162). Children play and create without a directed or predetermined end in mind. Interaction with other children encourages spontaneous solutions and new engaging explorations. "Art and play have a moral office not adequately taken advantage of it is asserted that they are responsible to life, to the enriching and freeing of its meanings" (p. 163). Individuals

develop intuition and apply "self-initiated effort . . . through personal interest, insight, and power" (*SS,* 1990, p. 149). When students approach work with their attention focused, then the imagination can foster limitless explorations through the feelings invoked in intuitive thinking processes.

*Developing Observation Skills*

5. Reading is an Interpretive Art Skill

Writing teaches the rudiments of reading; for the young child drawing pictographic symbols and interpreting them initiates the concept of reading. Telling the story develops language skills and faith in one's own ability to decipher meaning from the page. Transforming the abstract marks into a sequence based on importance and narrative succession introduces them to syntax and organization. Tone, mood, ambiance, the internal feelings, are essential cognitive and expressive pre-reading skills. Students interpret meaning and elaborate on the levels of significance. Sharing is the reading of the symbols, and the creation of meaning through imagery from experience and subconscious thought. Understanding the conceptual principles of reading is the foundation of on which pedagogy is based. If teachers expect an eight-year-old child to read for 30 minutes then teachers need to help the five-year-old child develop habits and skills of concentration. For the five-year-old his or her own artwork creates the greatest opportunity to develop directed thought and focus on interpretive interaction with a page or screen.

6. Changing Perceptions

The artist embodies the perceiver's attitude (*AE*, 1934, p. 48). As the child goes through the processes that the artist uses the child forms an understanding, not just of the importance of the methods chosen, but they also gain insight into the artist's motivations and feelings (p. 325). The artistic attitude creates opportunities to respond and reflect. The art of distant cultures can be presented and enters into the child's shared experience (p. 333) creating the potential to dissolve the effects of discontinuity (p. 336). When the arts of other people are combined with the current attitudes of the artist and the perceiver the experience of sharing can create greater unity and order in the community (p. 81). By these processes of inclusion and interaction art potentially can help remove prejudices (p. 325).

*Recognizing Sequential Development*

7. Initial Inceptive Experiences

When the child's initial experiences are incorporated into activities that consider the whole child they are inceptive (*AE*, 1934, p. 58). Merging past values with present incidents creates the foundations for all subsequent knowledge. Inclinations, purposes, and experiences engage the "culminating power and interest" (*CC*, Dewey, 1990, p. 192) to focus the mind. The "relationship between impressions, ideas, and action" (*SS*, Dewey, 1990, p. 105) is blended into an encompassing awareness through the wonder, importance and uniqueness of an experience. To allow the child's nature to fulfill "its own destiny" (*CC*, p. 209) the

activities of the whole curriculum should be structure to include the child's own reactions, experiences and conceptions.

8. The Child's Instinct for Making Art

Children feel and respond to an innate impulse to make art (*SS*, 1990, p. 40). They naturally gravitate toward active processes that incorporate their individual visions and expression through art-making (*AE*, 1934, p. 282). Children instinctively make art (*SS,* p. 44) by combing "observations, memory, and imagination" (p. 43). This process brings them to consciousness and self-awareness (p. 40).

9. Merging the Past, Present and Future

The mind connects and associates as it combines new experiences with past experiences to broaden and inform future actions. Impulsions from the subconscious interact with the environment to stir our prior experiences into action. Children in the classroom relate to new activities based upon what they already have experienced. Experiences are continuous and cumulative and are fully realized in our psychological natures. In *Experience and Nature* (1925) Dewey recognized "the doctrine of natural continuity" (*EN*, 1958, p. 23) relies on making adaptations in response to our experiences. In *Experience and Education* (1938) he observed that "the principle of continuity of experience means that every experience both takes up something from those which have gone before and modifies in some way the quality of those which come after" (*EE*, Dewey, 1938, p. 35). "Activities as they grow more complicated gain added meaning by greater attention to specific results achieved"

(*DE*, 1929, p. 241). Art-making is "a meditation of present materials by ideas drawn from past experience" (*AE*, 1934, p. 278). The students' future is a promise to merge the possibilities of the present with their past experiences.

10. Forming Positive Habits of Posture and Activity

F. Matthias Alexander taught Dewey the importance of being physically aware of how one performs tasks. In art-making students develop new skills as teachers present methods to make a child aware and conscious by combining psychological creative activities within the physical action of making. "The spontaneity of childhood is a delightful and precious thing" that needs to be enlightened as a means to develop genuine self-expression through proper work habits and exercises for improving "the art of conscious control" (Dewey's introduction to Alexander, 1918, p. xvii). Dewey's "thinking in activity" taken with Alexander's "directing energy" both "aim to resolve the mind-body dichotomy in both our language and our thought" (Dewey's introduction to Alexander, 1995, p. xxiii). Dewey believed this merging held "the promise and potentiality of the new direction that is needed in all education" (Dewey's introduction to Alexander, 1932, p. 12). This resolution of the mind-body dichotomy must be applied properly with the young, with the growing generation, in order that they may come to possess as early as possible in life a correct standard of sensory appreciation and self-judgment (Dewey's introduction to Alexander, 1923, p. xxxiii). Dewey said "for the sake of its

lasting effect upon habits of mind: Art is again the answer to this demand" (*DE*, Dewey, 1929, p. 241).

*Becoming Aware of How the Parts Relate to the Whole*

11. Art-Making as the Uniting Activity

Dewey stated "the problem is to unify, to organize, education, to bring all its various factors together, through putting it as a whole into union with everyday life" (*SS,* 1990, p. 92). Art-making brings the artificially separate pursuits of the core subjects of the curriculum into a cohesive understanding of the varying experiences. The promise of Dewey's 1900 "first hand contact with actualities" (p. 11) in "work that engages the full spontaneous interest and attention of the children" (p. 13) is fulfilled in making art. Art acts to bridge isolated parts of the fragmented school system and unite them into a coherent organic organization. "The easy thing is to seize upon something in the nature of the child," to "develop consciousness . . . as the key to the whole problem" instead of yielding to artificial specialization and the antagonistic formulations of: "the child vs. the curriculum; or the individual nature vs. social culture" (*CC,* 1990, p. 182). "The child and the curriculum are simply two limits which define a single process" (p. 189).

12. Curriculum as an Organic Whole

By translating the lesson plan activities into interests and skills that the child can apply to everyday life, schools can foster cohesive environments. Curriculum

must be organized to fuse the core subjects together into a unified expression. "Memories, not necessarily conscious but retentions that have been organically incorporated in the very structure of the self, feed present observations" (*AE*, 1934, p. 89). Art organically incorporates our present observations into the understandings that result from experience.

Art experientially allies science and history (*SS,* 1990, p. 18), allowing children to work ideas "out for themselves with actual materials, aided by questions and suggestions from the teacher" (p. 21). Art-making develops the imagination and the scientific method illuminates its activities (p. 24). Art-making incorporates the child's natural "impulses and tendencies to make, to do, to create, to produce" (p. 26). Dewey bemoans schools as systems in which "the entire range of the universe is first subdivided into sections called studies; then each one of these studies is broken into bits" (p. 103). The long-term holistic goals of society require a reorganization of the priorities of the school to embrace the nature of children and present the expanse of the curriculum activities into one continuous conception.

*Creating a Positive Self-efficacy*

13. The Teacher's Role in Guiding Child-Centered Learning

For teachers, the children entrusted to his or her classroom are their primary concerns. Teachers serve students in developing the knowledge and experiences that will inform their futures choices. As guides, teachers engage learners' emotions to create and foster their interests by expanding the students' experiential horizons

through projects and activities that the curriculum introduces. Teachers must know the individual student and allow her or him to explore their predilections and interests as the students assimilate knowledge into their conceptions of the world and their ever-evolving place within it. By sharing their own experiences, teachers influence the children's choices as they guide the possible actions their students will perform (*AE*, 1934, p. 113). To bring the fullness of meaning into the daily lives of children, teachers need to engage art-making and sharing as the culminating activities upon which interactive curriculums can be built.

14. Creating Self-Identity and Self-Knowledge

Meaning is best created by interaction through direct experience (*AE*, 1934, p. 306). Activities stir earlier experiences into action from the subconscious by active participation through conscious interaction (pp. 65-66). When learning is connected with the experience of making (p. 49), the artist loses him or herself, delighting in the varied qualities and forms (p. 104). Art creates modes for interaction (p. 134). Sharing the class' creations builds deeper understandings of the self and one's classmates by continuously and cumulatively creating the means for interacting (p. 220). Imaginative explorations are catalyst for individual development and establishes connections that can create a group identity (p. 204). Learning is self-actualizing. "The moment children act they individualize themselves" (*SS,* 1990, p. 33). Through art-making the child's "representative and constructive imagination" is brought into his or her "own expanding consciousness" (p. 108).

15. Creative Problem Solving

The process of art-making actively creates problems and solves them through experiments, judgment and insight. Art-making is a process of trusting one's own abilities to transform their past experiences through inventively using materials in the present moment while projecting the future outcomes. When applying new knowledge and skills to solve problems a child develops a spirit of exploration as she or he applies the scientific method. Through selecting and concentrating (*AE*, 1934, p. 126) the child focuses their "amazing interest" (p. 125). Judgments develop from acts of controlled inquiry through insight and experience (p. 300). In working in actualities children employ the "power of interpretation, of drawing inferences, of acute observation and continuous reflection" (*SS,* 1990, p. 54). The "instincts of construction and communication" develop aspects of "something like scientifically directed inquiry" (p. 57). Art-making functions at a higher intellectual level triggering reflection that "involves judging, reasoning, deliberation; it means that the child has a *question of his own* and is actively engaged in seeking and selecting relevant material with which to answer it" (p. 148).

16. Language Development Through Art Sharing

How Barnes presented and shared artwork influenced Dewey's ideas about art education. When children sit together in a circle with their paintings, taking turns telling what the work means and discussing their classmates observations, they expand vocabulary skills and the ability to think verbally. The teacher mediates,

guiding students' syntax and language development, and enhancing their ability to express themselves. Of course, people also learn to know each other better by sharing ideas and concepts that are important to them. In sharing their own work and ideas and by observing their classmates' work they form deeper and more meaningful friendships based on their dreams and hopes.

17. Forming a Group Identity

Individuals and their work in a class define the group, leaving an indelible imprint on the maker and the class (*AE*, 1934, p. 331). When creating and sharing together children develop a shared outlook on the human condition as they deepen their feelings of human loyalty. Dewey believed, "Values that lead to production" and intelligent enjoyments are "incorporated into the system of social relationships" (p. 344). The creative works of individuals in a classroom define the group and become part of their shared intellectual enjoyment. Shared experiences bond event and scenes and are works of art themselves (p. 63).

18. Socialization through Sharing Artworks

Children are capable of vast and infinite ranges of expression. "The language instinct is the simplest form of the social expression of the child. Hence it is a great, perhaps the greatest of all educational resources" (*SS,* 1990, p. 43). Children principally are drawn to all the "needs and aims" of any activity by its social dimensions (p. 101). Children socialize through a "culture of imagination" (p. 144). When children display their artwork and explain what a piece means, they are sharing

their ideas and actively engaging in exploring verbal expression. All classroom activity based on "contact and communication" (*EE,* 1938, p. 38) helps "dissolve the effects of discontinuity" (*AE*, 1934, p. 336).

19. Interest Fuels Learning

Art-making focuses the mind "in one of the most exacting modes of thought" and spurs creativity leading students to adventuresome discoveries (*AE*, 1934, p. 45). Interest fuels learning (p. 310). "The imaginative play of the child's mind comes through the cluster of suggestions, reminiscences, and anticipations that gather about the things he uses" (*SS,* 1990, p. 123). Children respond to each other and their surroundings spontaneously connecting past experiences and subconscious musings with future projections that are congealed in the art-making of the present moment. "Pleasure-giving, exciting, or transient" activities are the best way of making "an appeal to the child's spontaneous interest" (p. 136). The teachers' main methodology is to channel children's learning and energies into "self-sufficient center[s] of interest and attention" (p. 142). Dewey exclaimed: "Learning is active. It involves reaching out of the mind. It involves organic assimilation starting from within" (*CC,* 1990, p. 187).

20. The Power of the Imagination

"Imagination is the chief instrument of good" (*AE*, 1934, p. 348). Human loyalties are formed through the sympathy gained from placing oneself in circumstances and conditions of others. "The ideal factors in every moral outlook and

human loyalty are imaginative" (p. 348). Dewey charges adults to recall our own childhood experiences as he pleaded, "If we once believe in life and in the life of the child, then will all the occupations and uses spoken of, then will all history and science, become instruments of appeal and materials of culture to his imagination, and through that to the richness and orderliness of his life" (*SS*, 1990, p. 39).

*Child of Today/Tomorrow*

A child within today's education system all too often "proceeds by methods so literal as to excludes the imagination" (*AE*, 1934, p. 347). When the imagination is excluded his or her "desires and emotions" are remote to the core of the pedagogical emphasis. The present educational system all too often inflects anxiety. Anxiety kills the free flow of the mind's processes. For children fear of receiving a negative judgment often brings a sense of dread of assessment instruments that, rather than inspire, challenge the child's tolerance of boredom. Consider the numerical qualifiers imposed upon a child, purporting to assess their intelligence and then projecting from it a definition of the child's potential. In the quest to assess teachers, institutions and students the administration has risked turning schools into testing institutions. Dewey's view of the negative effects of anxiety is expressed in: "Only when the past ceases to trouble and anticipations of the future are not perturbing is a being wholly united with his environment and therefore fully alive. Art celebrates with peculiar intensity the moments in which the past reinforces the present and in which the future is a quickening of what now is" (p. 18).

The child of tomorrow will experience education very differently. The levels of interaction are beyond our conception and could only be mused upon as some fantastical science fiction. Dewey said of the process of innovation, "Creative intelligence is looked upon with distrust: the innovations that are the essence of individuality are feared, and generous impulse is put under bonds not to disturb the peace. Were art an acknowledged power in human association and not treated as the pleasuring of an idle moment or as a means of ostentatious display, and were morals understood to be identical with every aspect of value that is shared in experience, the 'problem' of the relation of art and morals would not exist" (*AE*, 1934, p. 348). Our understandings of the world are themselves creations. Dewey proposed that through art people could reach into the unknown to project meaning, "Art has been the means of keeping alive the sense of purposes that outrun evidence and of meanings that transcend indurated habit" (p. 348).

A child explores their concepts and enriches their experiences by experimenting with a box of watercolor. Painting is a tool and a guide to clues revealing the imagination in the movement of brush directed and discovered thought. "The union that is presented in perception persists in the remaking of impulsion and thought" (*AE*, 1934, p. 349). Dewey pronounced on the next to last page of *A as E,* "Imagination is the chief instrument of the good. It is more or less a commonplace to say that a person's ideas and treatment of his fellows are dependent upon his power to put himself imaginatively in their place. But the primacy of the imagination extends

far beyond the scope of direct personal relationships. Except where 'ideal' is used in conventional deference or as a name for a sentimental reverie, the ideal factors in every moral outlook and human loyalty are imaginative" (p. 348). Dewey's last sentence of *Art as Experience* places art at the pinnacle of educational reform: "Art is a mode of prediction not found in charts and statistics, and it insinuates possibilities of human relations not to be found in rule and precept, admonition and administration" (p. 349).

### *Intuition: Children, Art-Making and How We Learn*

I believe the evidence presented here bears out that John Dewey truly is a significant influence in the history of art-education. Although he drew from his predecessors, those who followed Dewey are in his debt: primarily for focusing teaching and learning on activities children are naturally drawn too, and then channeling children's interests through activities to fulfill our curriculum goals. Dewey's categories of occupations, the activities he proposed for learning by doing, express medias we now would classify as the arts. Dewey compiled experience, nature, education and democracy with art as the prime model for integrating them together in our curriculum. Dewey recognized that art is the central means of how people learn. His educational methodology was based on engaging children in processes that fuel their minds and spirits. By focusing children's attention on what captures their interests and compels their activity in self-motivating experiences teachers encourage the child's faith that the questions that he or she asks will be

resolved by his or her own exploration and intuition. For effective self-directed learning to take place, one must believe that they can satisfactorily answer their own questions. Art-making is the natural, instinctive, means through which people learn to direct their thoughts in an intuitive process. Art-making teaches children to trust their own narrative expression, which is essential to developing positive conceptual analyses. Art-making is the instinctual expression of one's knowledge that merges subconscious memories and dreams with the sensations of the present moment. This expression integrates all experience. Thus, art-making should become the pervading mode for our pedagogy.

Combine what Dewey actually said about children engaged in making art, and apply what he said about art, both in its creative and appreciative function with his theories of how we learn, and he laid a foundation on which to build an art-based curriculum. Relating Dewey's ideas to art-education, particularly for young children, can transform their learning skills for life. The repeated exercises of sharing are self-emancipating. Students learn to create relationships intellectually and emotionally through their artwork. Dewey believes "The *ultimate* objects of science are *guided* processes of change" (*EN,* 1958, p. 160). Individuals determine and guide the changes, both personally and as a society by the questions they pose in dialogue: "discourse in terms of scrutinized, tested, and related meanings, is a fine art" (p. 203). Accepting criticism from others help nurture the values and attitudes upon which a collective is built. As children make art they build relationships and a potentially

pluralistic society. Eduacators need strategies to foster enduring lifetime-learners, which is an undebatable goal of education: to develop in its students the means to self-directed inquiry that further encourages a person's ability to self-actualize and be fulfilled in his or her pursuit of happiness.

The teachers of today and tomorrow must be drawn into this vital discussion. Kindergarten and elementary classroom teachers need to engage in a dialogue of the benefits of art-based education in the conference rooms and teacher lounges. Core to the teaching profession is the understanding that one cannot actually teach someone to think: thinking is an instinctive process that evolves and continues evolving at ever-increasing speed as civilization expands the means of communicating and deepens levels of understanding.

Instantly communicating and constantly interacting with electronic media has radically changed contemporary lives and expectations. Among cell phones, iPods, video screens, Internet feeds, blogs and electronic game boards today's child is rarely ever alone in his or her own thought and imagery. All means of communication, information, and entertainment must be realized as the potential learning tools they are and will be. Art is the application of this understanding, the groundwork of how thoughts are connected and ideas are coalesced together in new meanings and knowledge. The components of experience are formed in the coupling of memory and the circumstances of the present moment with the projecting of what they can mean in

the future. Imagination is an intuitive process that combines the forms of experience; the implications imply and ultimately design the future.

As people develop knowledge, making their choices through instincts and intuition, by projecting and containing concepts, they create themselves at the center of their thoughts. Virtual influences are only ideas, becoming components of concepts that are composed and ordered from the imagination and direct experience. A child begins with the simplest materials and impulsions. With crayon, watercolors, clay, scissors, glue and scraps of color paper the child establishes the relationship of thought and control by experimenting and evaluating instructors' suggestions and their own intuitive processes. The teacher is a conscious guide helping to further a child's developing intelligence. The child engages his or her intuitive processes in art-making and allows the artist within her or himself to guide them through a progression of enhanced exchanges that they discover in the very process of creation. Children set themselves on an adventure in direct action to control the meaning and means of what they create by inciting and manipulating causality and their experiences. Art-making relates doing and interpreting. The self-generated expressions create thought and awareness.

Ultimately Dewey's question from *School and Society* remains unanswered: "Why are we so hard of heart and so slow to believe? The imagination is the medium in which the child lives" (*SS*, 1990, p. 61). The creative energy of the mind is our source of intellectual stimulus that engages and directs our intellectual development.

The child, in terms of empathy, compassion, feelings, their relationship to their dreams and the subconscious as well as their projections of a universal consciousness are equal or not less than that of a person any other age. What is needed is a curriculum that acknowledges who children are and how curriculum could address their future needs. *Art as Experience* is the philosophical foundation on which to create the unified curriculum for today and tomorrow's children and lifetime learners.

Bibliographic Abbreviations for Dewey's Major Texts

*AE* *Art as Experience*

*CC* *The Child and the Curriculum*

*DE* *Democracy and Education*

*EE* *Experience and Education*

*EN* *Experience and Nature*

*ENF* *On Experience, Nature and Freedom*

*HWT* *How We Think*

*HNC* *Human Nature and Conduct*

*MW* *John Dewey: The Middle Works Volume 6 1910 – 1911*

*PS* *Postscript: Three Years of the University Elementary School*

*SS* *The School and Society*

*ST* *Schools of Tomorrow*

*SW* *Selected Writings: John Dewey on Education*

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*Vita*

David Hefner graduated from Baylor University (B.S. in Education with a kindergarten specialization). He moved to Austin in 1976 and taught kindergarten for seven years, the last six at The Open Door, a non-profit school dedicated to integrating students with special needs into a mainstream program. After kindergarten, Hefner studied painting and printmaking at The University of Texas at Austin (M.F.A. Painting 1991). For the next seven years he taught children (ages 4-12), at Laguna Gloria Art Museum, a course he created and developed as "Artist Explorers." He first taught college at Concordia University in Austin, including painting and art history. In 1999 he began teaching painting and drawing at Texas State University in San Marcos. In 2001 he was invited into the Art Education department, teaching art-based curriculum to future elementary teachers and supervising K-12 art student-teachers. Since 2005, he has continued in the Art Education department, as well as teaching Watercolor in the Studio department. Throughout the years from 1985 Hefner maintained an active studio practice producing paintings and woodcut prints and showing his artwork, predominately in Austin. At the beginning of 2004 he entered the doctoral program in Curriculum and Instruction at The University of Texas in Austin.

Permanent Address: 4304 Bellevue Ave., Austin, Texas 78756

This dissertation was typed by the author.